NOVEMBER 1952

COMMENTARY

Intelligence Reports on the Two Enemies
Stalin's Trojan Horse Against America — MAURICE J. GOLDBLOOM
Launching the New Fascist International — L. POLIAKOV

A Mystic Philosopher on East Broadway — HERBERT WEINER

Cross-Tides of North African Revolt — HERBERT LUETHY

The Sectarian Conflict Over Church and State — WILL HERBERG

The Tomb of Jethro—A Story — A. A. DAVIDSON

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On the Horizon—
Only So Big?—A Puzzler — NATHAN ASCH

The Study of Man—
The Third Generation in America — M. L. HANSEN

BOOKS IN REVIEW

Emil L. Fackenheim — Alfred Werner — R. F. Tannenbaum
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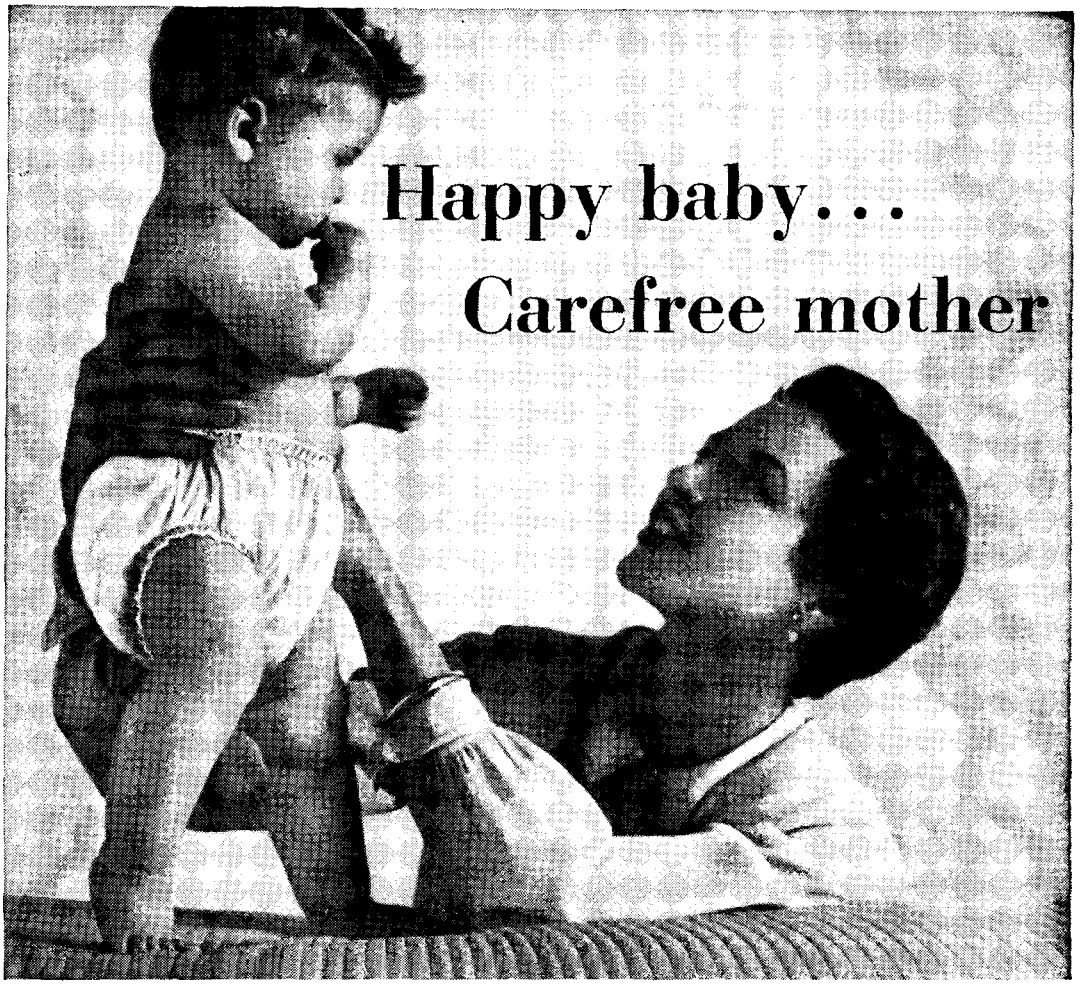

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IN FORTHCOMING ISSUES OF

COMMENTARY

The Revaluation of American Capitalism *Daniel Bell*

J. K. Galbraith's *American Capitalism* is the most serious of a number of books which have discovered hitherto undetected virtues in American capitalism – and sometimes in just those aspects of it most severely attacked. Mr. Bell discusses the weaknesses and strengths of American capitalism in a period of partial mobilization, in the light of the writings of some of its critics and defenders.

Fairfield and Yoknapatawpha Counties *Steven Marcus*

Recent anthologies of the American short story reveal two rigid forms into which that once fluid and in some ways characteristically American genre has hardened–the suburban "Connecticut story" and the "Southern story."

"One Voice" for American Jewry? *Oscar Handlin*

For forty years or more, the demand has been recurrently raised that all American Jews and their organizations unite so that they can "speak as one voice" and act as a single political force. Opinion has been sharply divided on this issue from the early days of the Kehillah movement, through the abortive American Jewish Conference, to the present efforts to unify the four Jewish communal relations organizations under a single central authority. Professor Handlin of Harvard University, student of group life in America and of the unfolding American Jewish community, tries for some perspective on the movement for unity in the light of group needs and the evolving American democratic pattern.

My Father Was a Hero *Shlomo Katz*

Shlomo Katz's reflective portrait of his father is a moving and memorable addition to the portrait gallery of American Jewish life. In the department "From the American Scene."

Israel and U.S. Foreign Policy *Hal Lehrman*

An informed and authoritative account of the problems involved in American and British efforts to plug the Near Eastern gap in the defenses of the free world – an effort which has run into an apparently immovable obstacle in the obstinate refusal of the Arab world to accept, and work with, Israel.

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COMMENTARY

STALIN BUILDS A TROJAN HORSE AGAINST AMERICA

Warning: Another "Popular Front" in the Making

MAURICE J. GOLDBLOOM

ON OCTOBER 15, 1952, Joseph Stalin told the 19th Congress of the Communist party of the Soviet Union that it was now the task of Communists abroad to "raise the banner of bourgeois democratic freedoms" and "the banner of national independence," and to become "patriots of your country," in order "to rally around you the majority of the people." (It is perhaps superfluous to mention that this advice was *not* intended to apply to the Communist parties of Poland, Rumania, Czechoslovakia, and Bulgaria.) Thus Stalin put the seal of his personal approval on a line which had been developing gradually for well over a year, and which had given rise to new "popular fronts," and attempts to form them, in many countries throughout the world.

The new line has been introduced at slightly different times, and in somewhat different forms, in the various parts of the world. Like all Communist lines, it is designed above all to buttress and extend the power of Stalin's regime. When Communists unite or try to unite with non-Communist forces, the unity they propose is always directed *against* something or somebody. When the world Communist movement calls for unity, its target is the main enemy of the USSR at the moment. In the 30's, the Popular Front was directed against Nazi Germany; today the new "popular front" is directed primarily against the United States. It is intended to split the free world by exploiting those "internal contradictions" with-

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IN COMMENTARY'S first issue seven years ago this month, soon after the close of World War II, we said editorially that we would consider it a prime obligation—under the charter granted us by the American Jewish Committee—to bring our readers information and sober analysis on that greatest threat to human freedom in man's history: the force, we called it, "more destructive than the [just invented] atom bomb itself"—totalitarian terrorism. How well we have covered this journalistic "beat" we leave it to our readers to judge. In any case, we have worked our hardest at the complex job of exposing the monster with the two heads—fascism and Communism. Here, at another critical juncture in the interminable assaults on freedom that mankind has suffered during the past four decades, we bring reports from two of our most knowledgeable contemporary recorders of totalitarian designs and maneuvers. MAURICE J. GOLDBLOOM writes of the meaning of the new Communist "popular front," and L. POLIAKOV reports (page 413) on the revived international conspiracy of fascism. Their news, while not happy, is not meant to be alarmist: from a clear view of the facts, we may hope to take the proper measures to meet the danger. During 1947 and 1948 Mr. Goldbloom wrote a monthly review of world events, "The Month in History," for COMMENTARY. Subsequently, he went abroad to serve with the ECA in Greece, whence he returned some months ago.

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in it on which Stalin laid so much emphasis in his recent report to the Soviet Communist party. As always, there is a flexibility of tactic: the specific nature of the contradictions seen as existing in each country will determine the exact maneuver to be used toward achieving the central objective, which is that of separating the rest of the free world from the United States.

In Asia and Africa, where anti-Europeanism is widespread, the Communist parties are to win the confidence of the native nationalists, do everything possible to intensify their differences with the European powers and, above all, make anti-Europeanism the fuel for anti-Americanism. In Europe, the Communist appeal will be to wounded national pride and the resentment against dependence on America; also to the reluctance of all classes to make sacrifices for the sake of military security and to the carefully nurtured fear of a war in which Europe would be "an American cat's-paw" and a Russo-American battleground.

In the United States the problem is more complex: the American Communist party may agree with Senator Capehart in demanding that we end the war in Korea by accepting the Chinese terms, but it is hardly likely that this will create unity of action between Communists and Republican isolationists. It may be that the Kremlin has not yet figured out in detail what tactics the American Communists are to employ in the next "period"; as has happened before, this question may not even have a high priority in its planning.

THE new popular front line first showed up on the international horizon in several colonial and semi-colonial countries. As early as March 17, 1950, the Cominform organ, *For a Lasting Peace, for a People's Democracy*, reported that the Communist party of Indonesia had initiated a united front with the Socialist party and the Workers' party there "to preserve the independence of Indonesia." On April 14 of the same year it carried an article by Kyuichi Tokuda, secretary-general of the Japanese Communist party, in which he declared: "A democratic national front of all strata of the people, including that of national capital, is essential."*

Tokuda went on to tell how the Japanese Communists were trying to build a political alliance with the Farmer-Labor and Socialist parties. And the May 26 issue of the same magazine reported that the Cuban Communists (who call themselves the Popular Socialist party) had made electoral alliances with a number of other parties in that country's municipal elections.

At this time, however, the European Communists were still following the "left" line which had been firmly established since 1947. Thus in the February 1950 elections for the British Parliament, there were over a hundred Communist candidates, and party secretary Harry Pollitt declared: "On these basic things, the right-wing Labor leaders do not differ from the Tories." And in April of the same year Etienne Fajon told the congress of the French Communist party that its task was "political struggle against the bourgeois state."

THIS radical line dated back to 1946 and 1947, when it became clear that the postwar "governments of national union" that had

*It is worth pointing out that there has been considerable discussion in Communist party literature in the past on the fine distinctions between "united front" and "popular front." The first term was used in the 20's to refer to alliances with Socialist parties and trade unions entered into in an attempt to overcome the isolation forced on the Communists when they split off to set up their own parties and trade unions. The "united front" served mainly as a way of exposing members of the Socialist organizations to Communist influence and propaganda. The term "popular front" referred to a broader alliance of all anti-fascist parties, whether working-class or middle-class, and its aim was less to build up the Communist party by raiding other leftist parties than to influence the foreign policies of the Western nations in an anti-Nazi and pro-Soviet direction. Still later, as the Marxist inhibitions on the full freedom of Communist maneuver were left further and further behind, the term "national front," or "patriotic front," was used to refer to alliances which included even right-wing groups. It is this last type of "popular front" that the Communists are now attempting to forge.

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sprung up throughout Europe for varying periods after the liberation would not turn into "people's democracies" except where the Red Army was present. In one Western European country after another, the Communists found themselves on the outside looking in. Usually it happened because they overestimated their own strength and precipitated a showdown for which they were not ready. Once this had happened, there was no returning to the previous state of connubial bliss. Events in Eastern Europe offered too clear a warning to be disregarded by even the most trusting Western politician.

At the same time postwar Europe appeared to offer excellent prospects for a "revolutionary" line. The shift from a war to a peace economy, occurring in a partly devastated and wholly disrupted continent, could reasonably be expected to produce promisingly troubled waters in which to fish. The United States seemed likely to return to its normal insular concerns; in 1946 many Americans were far more troubled by the aggressions of the OPA than those of the Kremlin; they wanted the boys home and the tax-burdensome armies and navies reduced—as they were. And there were few political forces in Western Europe with any clear alternative program to offer.

Hence the Communists initiated mass strikes and demonstrations designed to intensify class conflicts and further undermine tottering economies. Parliamentary opposition became parliamentary obstruction—the more effective because only too often the governments in office had little in the way of positive policy to be obstructed. In 1947 the "revolutionary" line showed notable signs of success in both France and Italy, while in Greece, Communist guerrillas dominated the countryside within even a few miles of Athens, the capital.

In accordance with Stalinist custom, the "revolutionary" line was applied more or less mechanically, whether it fitted the circumstances or not. If the Kremlin had good reason to gamble on successful revolutions in France, Italy, and Greece, even the rosiest-colored glasses could not reveal the same prospects for Britain or the Scandinavian countries. Yet the Communist parties of those countries dutifully went out on the revolutionary limb—and thereby rapidly isolated themselves from the rather considerable peripheral followings they had acquired during the war and immediate postwar periods.

In Asia the postwar "left" line took the form of armed revolts in one country after another. But if China was ripe for Communist seizure, India was not. The attempted Communist putsch in Hyderabad, and Communist riots in other parts of India, probably did more to disillusion intellectual sympathizers than to win mass support. In Indonesia and Burma the Communist party gave up positions of substantial influence in order to stage futile, if troublesome, armed revolts. In Malaya they sacrificed control of an effective urban trade union movement in order to start a guerrilla war on the countryside. In the Philippines the Huk leader, Luis Taruc, who had come in to Manila and taken his seat in the senate under an agreement with the government, returned to the hills and took up arms again. In South Korea the Communists attempted to seize power by force after boycotting the elections. And in Japan, the first of a long series of riots and political strikes took place.

But neither in Europe nor in Asia did this radical line achieve the results the Communists had hoped for. It was successful in picking off the ripe—and luscious—plums of Czechoslovakia and China, and it certainly created a great deal of grief elsewhere. But it also drew a clear line between Communists and anti-Communists and thereby set a boundary beyond which no advance was possible short of full-scale war. In Italy the Communist bloc failed to win power in the 1948 elections, and each successive political strike aroused less enthusiasm than the one before. In France, too, the workers showed an increasing unwillingness to let themselves be sacrificed for the sake of the Communist party. In Germany the blockade of Berlin was frustrated by the airlift, and Communist strength dwindled to the vanish-

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ing point. At the same time Tito's defection in Yugoslavia undermined the morale of the entire Communist movement, and the gradually increasing effect of Marshall aid checked the West European economic decay on which the Communists had hoped to feed. By the end of 1949, the Kremlin had good reason to consider a change of tactics.

As we have seen, this change began to make its appearance in colonial countries first. This may have been because the basic, long-term Communist line has always been more conciliatory to non-Communist circles in such countries, even when the temporary line is furthest "left." It may also be partly attributable to the greater readiness of colonial peoples to forgive and forget—if they ever knew about—the sins of Soviet imperialism, because of the more immediately present sins of the West.

In Europe the first sign that a new approach was in the offing came with the Stockholm Peace Congress in the middle of March 1950. Just as in the case of the Popular Front of the 30's (heralded in 1934 by the Amsterdam Conference Against War), the requirements of Soviet foreign policy were translated into the most universally acceptable of all slogans—peace. In the campaign for the Stockholm Appeal an attempt was made to draw in all sorts of groups and individuals toward whom the Communists had only shortly before been expressing undying antagonism. (Only two months before, in December 1949, a Cominform resolution had declared that working-class unity could only be attained by "irreconcilable and consistent struggle in theory and practice against the right-wing Socialists and reactionary trade union leaders.") In most countries, however, the Communists as a political organization still continued to vilify the people whose support was being sought by them as peace-lovers. This kind of "cultural lag" is frequently to be seen when the Communist line changes; it is probably due in part to the fact that even Communists are not quite automatons, and partly to the Kremlin's tendency to give the old line one last spin while already experimenting with the new. (This might help to explain the plunge in Korea at a time when the drive for the Stockholm Appeal was already in full swing.)

The European country in which the Stockholm Appeal received the broadest support was Italy, where Palmiro Togliatti had at no time been really eager to risk his powerful organization in radical adventures. Apparently because he led the largest Communist party in the free world, he had been able to modify the radical Moscow line sufficiently to permit him to keep some of his bridges unburned. These now served him in good stead, and the Italian signers of the Appeal included such figures as the Republic's first president, Enrico De Nicola, the Christian Democratic president of the chamber of deputies, Giovanni Gronchi, and former Premiers Ivanoe Bonomi, Vittorio Emmanuele Orlando, and Francesco Nitti.

But "unity for peace" was still a very limited and one-sided type of unity. The Communists began to feel the urgent need of the *support* of definite non-Communist *political forces*, not simply of humanitarian expressions. But the only form of "unity" they proposed was still one of Communist control. Even when on July 4, 1950, Maurice Thorez called for a "government of democratic unity" for the defense of "peace and freedom," it was not clear whether this represented anything more than an invitation to everybody to unite behind the Communist party.

Elsewhere, however, the new line began to take the form of a demand for a "national front" in which the Communists offered to range themselves beside other parties—as long as they were anti-American, or at least neutralist. In July 1950 the Costa Rican Communists—known as the Popular Vanguard party—who had been suppressed after their unsuccessful attempt at an armed *coup* in 1948, called for the formation of a "national front" to defend the country's "independence" against Yankee imperialism. Costa Rican memories were not, however, short enough for this call to find any im-

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mediate response. At the same time the Uruguayan Communist party was proposing a "united front of all progressive forces," only to be turned down. A little later, more of the Asian parties fell into line. In October the Thai (Siamese) Communists issued a call for a "national democratic front" against the government of Pibul Songgram. At about the same time the Nepal Communists—who were still engaged in a guerrilla revolt—made a similar appeal addressed specifically to the Nepal National Congress, which was part of the government against which they were fighting. In December 1950 the Ceylon Communists spelled the line out in a little more detail: not only did they decide to create a "Popular Democratic Front," but they condemned those "left sectarians" who wanted a "socialist revolution." And in the same month the Communists of Ecuador went so far as to declare: "Notwithstanding the utterly incorrect foreign policy pursued by the Galo Plaza government—a policy constantly criticized by the Communist party of Ecuador—we are resisting the attempts of the reactionary elements to overthrow this government."

In Europe, the new line began to make headway with the return of Palmiro Togliatti from Moscow at the end of February 1951. On March 19 he specifically offered to back any regime in Italy which would withdraw from the North Atlantic Treaty; he repeated this offer at the Communist party congress on April 3. Stating his readiness to "abandon opposition to a government that would pursue a peace policy," he proposed the constitution of the Italian Republic as the "political platform for the peace movement and for transforming the economic and social structure of the country." And he made his meaning still clearer on April 15, when he declared: "Let us do everything possible and take such peaceful measures as will wrest Italy from the front of those who are deliberately preparing another war. . . . In order to do this, the advent of Communists to power is not even necessary; all that is needed for a policy of peace is to be democratic and healthy-minded. The Communists will not create any difficulties, they will never place any obstacles in the way of a government that would pursue such a policy."

At the same time other European parties were making the shift. As early as February 1951 the British Communist party called for unity behind a "People's Government"—while still lambasting the leaders of the Labor party as tools of the Americans—and in April it instructed its local groups to propose united action in the local elections to the Labor party organizations, and to make it clear that they would give full support to Labor candidates where no Communists were running. In February, too, the German Communists offered conditional support to Social Democratic candidates in Bundestag by-elections, but were rebuffed. And in March, Léon Feix, a member of the Central Committee of the French Communist party, wrote: "The French Communist party has declared that French Communists will support any movement, any party, and any individual that, in the overseas territories, helps to weaken the imperialist camp—the camp of the warmongers." In June another Central Committee member, Georges Cogniot, pledged his party's support to any French government which would call for a five-power pact, peace in Viet Nam and Korea, a united and demilitarized Germany, laws against war propaganda, outlawing of the atom bomb, reduction of armaments, "rejection of agreements which run counter to national independence," improvement of the standard of living with the savings resulting from military cuts, and preservation of democratic liberties.

This was a true "national front" platform, avoiding any proposal that might agitate even the most conservative party. It is to be noted that all but two of the planks in this platform are concerned with foreign policy, and that the policy they spell out is one of pro-Soviet neutrality rather than of outright support of the Soviet Union. (It is particularly interesting that

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there is no mention of restoring the Franco-Soviet alliance that De Gaulle negotiated at the end of the war; the Soviet Union apparently has a realistic appreciation of the maximum for which it can hope in Western Europe today.) And of the two planks dealing with domestic affairs, one represents little more than a call for the preservation of the legal status quo, while the other (improvement of the standard of living)—granted its presupposition, a reduction in armaments—would meet with no objection from anyone. Yet it is clear now that there was less eagerness among the Communists in France than in Italy to adopt the new line; both the delay in promulgating it, and the contrast between the beautiful simplicity of Togliatti's generalizations and the painstaking detail of Cogniot's proposals, indicate this. And this reluctance, or resistance, appears to have persisted for over a year. It was reflected in the greater frequency and militancy of political strikes and demonstrations in France as compared to Italy, and in the absence of any attempt to secure a united front, even locally, with Socialists and Popular Republicans in the French local and parliamentary elections. (Such an attempt would undoubtedly have failed in at least the great majority of cases; but such considerations do not deter Communists from following a line.)

When Etienne Fajon condemned his comrades last June for repelling prospective allies by their tactics, he was not so much promulgating a new policy as bringing pressure to bear for the obedient execution of one already adopted but only reluctantly and inadequately carried out. This, too, explains the punishment the French Communist party administered to its old leaders, André Marty and Charles Tillon, in September 1952. This was not the case of a new line requiring a scapegoat in the persons of people intimately associated with the old one; rather, Marty (who had been named acting secretary-general of the party as late as the end of May 1952) and Tillon appear to have disapproved of the new line and conducted a stubborn and reckless, and largely successful, delaying action against it.

Some resistance to the new line also appears to have been manifested in Western Germany, since it did not get into full swing there until after an open letter from the East German Socialist Unity party calling on the Communists and Social Democrats of the West to get together in a "joint struggle for peace and against remilitarization." In September 1951, after receiving this letter, the West German Communists announced their intention of acting in accordance with its recommendations, and confessed their own previous sectarianism. The meaning which they attributed to the new line became clear when, in a series of local and by-elections, they gave unconditional—and unwanted—support to Social Democratic candidates, although continuing to denounce the Social Democratic leaders as betrayers of the German workers and tools of the Americans.

NEVERTHELESS, since the summer of 1951, and except for the special case of France, attempts to set up the new national fronts have proceeded energetically in country after country. The Indian Communists pursued the new "popular front" tactics in the recent election, and in the subsequent parliamentary alignments in the national and state legislatures. (In the legislature of the Patiala and East Punjab States Union, they succeeded in overthrowing the Congress party cabinet by joining forces with the conservative Akali Sikh party). In Algeria, in August 1951, the Communists were able to get themselves accepted in a joint "Algerian Front in Defense of Freedom" together with the progressive nationalist Party of the Manifesto and the extremist nationalists led by Messali Hadj. In Greece the illegal Communist party operates through a front called the Union of the Democratic Left (EDA) that has tried to join the center coalition in the forthcoming elections (these will take place on November 16). But although the center had extended its alliances almost all the way both to the right and left in order to make sure of victory, it rejected EDA's

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bid. In the 1951 British general elections, the Communist party sharply restricted the number of its candidates and called for support of Labor candidates in other constituencies "to facilitate working-class unity." In August 1951 the Burmese Communists offered to end their revolt if they were taken into a coalition government. In Mexico the Communists sought to build a united front of all the groups against the government Party of Revolutionary Institutions in the 1952 presidential and congressional elections, and they succeeded in enlisting under the banner of the conservative General Henriquez Guzman. To do this, the Communists had to break with long-time party-liner Vicente Lombardo Toledano, who refused to give up his own candidacy. But the maneuver paid off; the alliance between the Communists and Henriquez Guzman was enough of a political threat to induce the government to postpone ratification of a defense agreement with the United States.

It would be possible to give additional instances from other countries. But the cases already cited appear sufficient to indicate that the Communists of the world have now substantially accomplished another important about-face.

LIKE that of the 30's, the new popular front springs from Soviet fears of isolation and encirclement. In the earlier period a "'revolutionary" line had resulted in the victory not of Communism but of Hitler; Stalin then became desperately afraid lest the monster he had done so much to create would join forces against him with the Western democracies he had done his best to destroy. Hence he abruptly reversed his policy toward the latter. The Communists, and their collaborators and dupes, who had been vociferously denouncing the "sham" of "bourgeois democracy" and the "fascism" of Roosevelt, accordingly became the most vociferous champions of the one and idolaters of the other. The true worth of this conversion became clear in 1939, when the Stalin-Hitler pact made fascism "a matter of taste" and restored the Western democracies to their pristine role of imperialist aggressors. For, however anxious Stalin had been to split the front of those whom he regarded as potential enemies, and ready to build an alliance with what he considered their weaker section, he far preferred an alliance with the stronger and more dangerous section. True, he guessed wrong both as to where the superior strength lay and as to the enduring value of an alliance with Hitler. But his basic approach to the problem—the opposite of the British balance-of-power approach—is not likely to have been changed by one mishap.

Today the United States plays exactly the same role in the Stalinist cosmos that belonged to Hitler's Reich between 1935 and 1939. As indicated, the aim of the new popular front is to build up opposition to the Americans, as that of the old one was to create a front against the Nazis. The slogans then were "resistance to aggression" and "defense of democracy." Economic aims had only a secondary place, serving merely as issues on which to mobilize the workers, and could always be sacrificed when the occasion warranted. Today we again see the Communists calling for unity to "smash the aggressors" and "stop the warmongers." Economic demands are raised chiefly as arguments against rearmament. But the Communists now ask far less than in the 30's. Then, they wanted the countries of Western Europe to mobilize *actively* for a crusade against Nazi Germany. Today, they merely want them to deny support to American aims. For, then, Stalin feared *actual* aggression from Hitler, and was looking for military allies to stop it. Today, he knows that there is no real danger that the United States will attack him.

But security against aggression is not enough to satisfy Stalin. The totalitarian regime of the Soviet Union is not able to rest so long as any potential focus of opposition exists, either internally or externally.*

*Peter Meyer, in his article "The Driving Force Behind Soviet Imperialism" (COMMENTARY, March 1952), showed that conflict between industrialization and the inefficiency of a despotic bureaucracy is another force behind the Soviet drive for expansion.—ED.

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Its expansion, like its domestic power, aims at totality. This expansion is not tied to a rigid timetable: the Kremlin may call a temporary halt, or even make a tactical withdrawal, when faced with opposition it regards as too strong to be overborne. But the aim of such periods of quiescence is always to prepare the way for new expansion by military and economic preparation, by diplomatic activity, and by the manipulation of foreign Communist parties. Today such a waiting period appears to be on the agenda. Korea has shown the Soviet Union that the time is not yet ripe for further major advances. Stalin knows that on almost every front the close alliance of the United States with the other free countries of the world opposes a barrier to Soviet expansion, whether by military or non-military means. Hence it is his intention to split that alliance.

But if he should succeed in doing this, the 1939 experience would seem to indicate the possibility of another abrupt reversal of front on Stalin's part. For the United States and her possessions do not lie in the immediate path of Soviet expansion. Hence, while the apparent target of the Soviet in its effort to split the free world is the United States, its real objective is the free countries of Europe and Asia. If they succumb to the new popular front, with its brave words about "peace," "national independence," and all the rest, and if the United States is isolated, the Soviet Union may again offer to divide the world with the United States by a "negotiated settlement" offering the bait of long-term peaceful coexistence—as she did immediately after the war. Thus she would seek to repeat again the stroke of 1939 by which she divided up Eastern Europe with Hitler's Germany—but this time, with Germany and Western Europe at her feet, she would be in an infinitely stronger position if she succeeded.

Meanwhile, this gives the American Communist party, and whatever friends and "liberal innocents" it can muster, a role somewhat different from that of Communist parties elsewhere. Here the aim cannot be to stir up anti-American sentiment, nor is any Communist-inspired "national front" possible; rather, the American Communists must complement the demands of their comrades abroad for "independence" from America by seeking to reinforce isolationist tendencies here. This would seem to be why just before the Republican nominating convention, Robert Taft and Herbert Hoover received a more than respectful hearing in the pages of the *Daily Worker* and *Pravda*.

The nomination of Eisenhower was certainly a grave disappointment to Moscow's "peace forces." (Whether this reaction was justified or not is not at issue here.) At the moment the Communists are trying to salvage a little from an obviously unsatisfactory national election by appealing for the unity of all "progressives" in favor of local "peace candidates." One may doubt, however, whether they take this effort very seriously. Rather, their main current concern is to preserve their organization so that it may in the future still be able to play the role assigned to it. And this task, for the present, seems to be enough to keep their hands full.

THE new popular front thus differs in many ways from that of the 30's. Its immediate aims, as we have seen, are more limited. The climate in which it is being attempted is in many ways much less favorable. In 1934 most Socialists and liberals still thought of Communists as erring brethren, but brethren nevertheless. Today this attitude, while unhappily surviving in many quarters, is much less common.

Soviet Russia's open aggression both under the Stalin-Hitler pact and in the postwar period, the fate of all non-Communist groups in the "People's Democracies," and the incontrovertible evidence of large-scale Communist espionage in Western countries have all had their effect. The slavish defense of Soviet policy by foreign Communist parties has been made more glaring by the nature of that policy; the Yugoslav revolt has served further to highlight the subservient role of other Communist parties.

Events in Eastern Europe have had a particularly sharp effect on West European

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Socialists, who have seen their sister parties rooted out in country after country behind the Iron Curtain. Hence their hostility to Communist "unity" offers a greater obstacle to a popular front than in the 30's. Indeed, the new line seems in many ways better calculated to appeal to rightist elements than to Socialists. The emphasis on "national independence" sometimes makes it difficult to distinguish the voice of Thorez from that of De Gaulle. Moreover as Togliatti's statements clearly show, the Communists are currently ready to offer their support without any of the traditional leftist ideological conditions if only their basic foreign policy demands are met. (Thus in Latin America they have recently given support to Perón, and to groups closely linked to him in other countries; he in his turn has been "neutral" —against the United States.)

If the events of recent years have created a gulf between Communists and other groups in Europe there is much more chance, however, that their new line will succeed in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. In colonial countries the democratic claims of the West frequently meet a skepticism which is readily comprehensible; totalitarian oppression in Eastern Europe often seems as distant and unreal as Buchenwald once did in Illinois.

At the same time, there is little reason for smugness about Europe: even in England there are still many appeals which the Communists can make with some hope of success. It is inevitable that there should be resentment against American predominance. This leads to a magnification of every American error—and there are American errors. Moreover, the United States is inevitably often forced, by the fact that her aid is a crucial factor in most national and international situations, to act as an arbiter in international and even domestic conflicts. Even if she were to show perfect wisdom and justice on such occasions, she could not avoid incurring the resentment of at least one of the disputants. In practice, both are apt to feel themselves aggrieved. (For example, the U.S.-sponsored compromise on German rearmament has satisfied neither most Germans nor most Frenchmen; in attempting to play the role of a neutral in the conflict between France on the one hand and Tunisian and Moroccan nationalists on the other, this country has damaged its prestige in both camps.)

The strain of rearmament is a real one for most European countries; it necessarily creates a readiness to seek a different way out. And when the United States asks further sacrifices from European countries at the same time that it cuts its own contribution, Communist propaganda has very substantial material to work on. If the burden of rearmament is thrown almost entirely on low-income groups as a result of lopsided and corrupt systems of taxation (as in France and Italy), this is further grist for the Communist mill. On the other hand, if the United States even ventures to suggest, as we recently did to French Premier Pinay, that a system of taxation should be made more equitable and effective, the Communists can join with the right in raising the banner of "national independence" from American interference.

American economic measures against the Soviet Union also run counter to the immediate interests of large groups in European countries. Our insistence that they cooperate in various types of embargoes strikes not only at national pride, but at pocketbooks. Here again the Communists can hope to find many allies in other sections of the population. Thus in Germany it is among the right-wing parties and their financial backers that pressure for trade with the East in strategic materials has been greatest; in Greece, a deputy belonging to the rightist Greek Rally of Marshal Papagos attended the Moscow economic conference.

ANOTHER potent weapon the Communists can use is the fear of reborn fascism. After all, Soviet totalitarianism is still only a potential threat in the eyes of most West Europeans, whereas the Nazi brand is something of which they have many vivid personal memories. Any American action which seems to threaten a revival of Nazism and

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fascism immediately awakens fears on which the Communists can play. This was true of German rearmament, a move that has caused emotional conflicts even among many of those who agreed that it was necessary. It is even truer of every step toward a rapprochement with Franco, not to mention such pieces of idiocy as the recent action of an American agency in Germany in subsidizing a group of former SS "youths." Democracy is not only the basis of our moral position; it is our principal practical argument against Stalinism, and when we compromise our position on it we gratuitously help the Communists to find allies in the very groups which should be our strongest supporters.

And finally, overriding all else, there is the fear of war. If Stalin can persuade Western Europe that his policy is really one of peace, and that it is the United States which seeks a military showdown, West European Communists will find many allies. For Western Europeans feel in their bones and nerves that their countries would be the battleground of such a war; ever with them is the fearsome anticipation of the atom-bombing of their cities, or a Russian occupation followed by an American liberation at an unspecified future date. Hence, it would seem obvious, American policy must at all times not only actually be directed to the prevention of war, but must also show that it is.

It does not seem likely that the new Communist line will bring major immediate dividends in Western Europe, although in some colonial and semi-colonial countries it is already proving its value to the Kremlin. But it is a line for the long pull, and Stalin can afford to wait. Asia is the great ripe plum, and Germany, not to speak of the rest of the continent, is still not fully out of reach. The factors which favor the building of an anti-American "popular front" or "national front" can be minimized by a sound American policy; but there is no ground for confidence that we can completely eliminate them all, however wise and benevolent we may be—and we must be both. And certainly any American retreat into isolationism or toward a relaxation of military and economic aid, or any swing to the right domestically and internationally, or any growth in illusion about the Soviets' long-time peaceful nature or intention, would play directly into the hands of the Kremlin. Thus, even at best, the new Communist line will remain a serious threat. The ideological battle for the world bids fair not to be over soon.

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LAUNCHING THE NEW FASCIST INTERNATIONAL

Hitler's Beaten Minions Rally Their Forces

L. POLIAKOV

MORE than a year ago, in May 1951, Swedish Malmö was the scene of a strange congress attended by several dozen people who came from five or six different Western European countries. This meeting caused something of a stir all over the world, and its proceedings were reported in the New York *Times,* the Paris *Monde,* and other big newspapers. Then, as usually happens, they lost interest. Yet this congress constituted the first open move to create international unity among fascists in postwar Europe—perhaps the first open move ever toward such an end.

The names of those who visited the Malmö congress are not altogether unfamiliar to the European public: there were Maurice Bardèche and Henri Bernard of France, Augusto de Marsanich and Fabio Lonciari of Italy, Franz Richter and K. H. Priester of Germany, Per Engdahl of Sweden, and a good number of others. (Oswald Mosley and Otto Skorzeny had been invited but were unable to obtain visas.) Easily the most notorious was the Frenchman Maurice Bardèche, who considers himself the spiritual heir of his brother-in-law, the late Robert Brasillach, one of the superior hacks of the French collaborationist press, who was executed after the Liberation. Since 1948 Bardèche has been active as apologist for his brother-in-law and, by extension, for all other war criminals. He has published a number of anti-Jewish, anti-American, and practically openly pro-Hitler pamphlets whose aggressive cynicism and clever sophistries have found a wide public, with translations in every European language. Such was their effect that even in the tolerant atmosphere of France today the authorities felt compelled to intervene, and some time after the Malmö meeting, in April 1952, Bardèche was sentenced to a year in prison for "inciting to violence."

Franz Richter, then a member of the Bonn parliament, owes his present notoriety to a scandal that broke when it was discovered that he was really a former Nazi vice-Gauleiter named Fritz Roessler. Arrested in the spring of 1952, while parliament was in full session, Roessler-Richter was found guilty on two counts of forgery and misrepresentation, and is now in jail.

Augusto de Marsanich, once a minister under Mussolini, is secretary-general of a political party called the Italian Social Movement. Per Engdahl has been an active leader of Swedish fascism for twenty years; Otto Skorzeny is famous as the SS desperado who, among other feats, freed Mussolini from his Grand Sasso prison in September 1944. If the Malmö congress couldn't boast of a single figure who had played an important role before 1945, it could at least claim the presence of people who had served fascism long and loyally.

After four days of deliberation the members of the congress published a manifesto calling for: "An independent and united Europe; German rearmament subject to the equality of German rights; replacement of the Atlantic Pact, in its present unsatisfactory form, by a European Union of De-

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fense forming a part of a system of alliances with non-European powers; inclusion of Spain in the European Union of Defense, as well as the aim of convincing hesitant pro-Communist elements to align themselves with the national socialist movement." Before closing, the congress also decided to set up a permanent committee of four members (Bardèche, Engdahl, de Marsanich, Priester), along with a European secretariat whose headquarters would be in Trieste. The choice of this international city was no doubt intended as a concrete symbol of these neo-fascists' ambition to unify Europe in their own way.

But wasn't it a little odd for the terms "fascism" and "international" to be linked together? By definition, fascism is a product of hypertrophied chauvinism, hence is strictly nationalist in character. Mussolini was the first to say that fascism was not exportable. How did it happen, then, that its latter-day champions in Europe had become fervent internationalists?

If Italian fascism was, in fact, an authentically nationalist movement, the limits of the racial claims of Nazism were *from the very beginning,* however, much less clearly defined. This ambiguity became even more conspicuous in the course of Hitler's rabid anti-Jewish campaign, which gained enthusiastic supporters for the Nazis among anti-Semites the world over. Once Hitler's rule had been spread over most of Europe, pro-Nazi sympathies that had only been ideological before the war took on an infinitely more concrete shape. Collaborationist movements and parties came to life, and often to power, in the various occupied countries. It was during those years that the Nazis raised the slogans of a "new order," a "new Europe," and, especially after 1941, a "crusade against Communism." Thousands of profiteers, ambitious schemers, and crackpots, certain of Germany's victory, sold themselves hand and foot to the Nazi cause, and other thousands of young fanatics enlisted in SS foreign legions and fought on the Russian front. Thus by 1945 there were many non-German Europeans who, to borrow Robert Brasillach's now famous phrase, "had more or less been to bed with Germany"; and though these people might claim to have been inspired by nationalist feelings, in actual effect they had served Nazi Germany alone. As *Nation Europa,* a postwar German magazine that will be dealt with further on, says: "It was only after 1939 that Germany, faced with an enormous number of tasks, turned toward the salutary European idea. War is the father of all things, and it was out of the war that the idea of Europe was born." Thus fascist internationalism was born out of Hitler's efforts to unify Europe under his yoke.

Events after Germany's collapse only increased the solidarity among fascists of all nationalities. The more prominent or clever among them managed to escape the Allied police, and poured by thousands into Spain and South America. An even greater number stayed behind, changed their names, falsified their papers, and lay low in the expectation of better days. At the same time various official Nazi departmental offices and organizations contrived to have their funds—which were frequently enormous—smuggled abroad or secreted in Germany. When the occupation authorities examined their records and vouchers all they could discover was that a lot of money had mysteriously disappeared.

And so, after the war, a host of Europeans of every nationality were to be found scattered throughout the world, yet united by many common memories and loyalties. These people enjoyed the favor of governments like Franco's and Perón's and sometimes had considerable money at their disposal. Their very status as political refugees and outlaws inevitably involved them in schemes and intrigues, and around these a revived fascist propaganda sprang up whose content corresponded to the last Nazi slogans of 1941 1944. (Actually, the term "neo-Nazism" would be more accurate when speaking of the opinions and activities of these people, but usage has already established "neo-fascism," which, for that matter, correctly emphasizes the international color of their

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aims.) Communication, in a variety of ways, was established between exiled leaders and partisans who had stayed behind in Germany, Italy, and elsewhere. These connections were kept super-secret, of course, but from time to time something would leak out. Thus several months ago, the *Frankfurter Rundschau,* a democratic German newspaper, reported that among the more than one hundred German officers serving as instructors with the Egyptian army were such former SS leaders as Oskar Dirlewanger and the notorious Adolf Eichmann, the organizer of Hitler's holocausts, who disappeared from sight in the final days of the war. This report has not been confirmed, and there may be an error of identification, but even so, the important part played by German military specialists in General Naguib's recent coup d'état seems incontestable.

Neo-fascist activity has in any case become bolder and bolder under the favoring circumstances of the cold war that has divided the world into two blocs and stirred up sentiment for a united Europe. It is this sentiment, coupled with the widespread fear of Communism, that offers internationalist neo-fascism its best chance. That chance varies greatly, of course, from country to country. Pro-Hitlerism was never really able to take root in France; and in spite of appearances to the contrary, a distinction must be made between the genuine collaborators in France and the Vichyites, even if both parties are now eager to whitewash Marshal Pétain's memory. The recent debates on German rearmament in the National Assembly have shown how unanimous French opinion still is in its horror of Hitler fascism.

There are, it is true, some small groups and factions in France today that openly propagandize for fascism, publishing newspapers like *Le Nouveau Prométhée, La Victoire,* and especially *Rivarol,* and even organizing rallies under such a slogan as "White men of all countries, unite!" But their field of action scarcely extends beyond a circle of veteran initiates of fascism who represent hardly anyone but themselves. The content of their papers is more often than not borrowed from German papers of similar complexion—and their funds, too, may come from abroad. As far as is known, the first neo-fascist group to emerge in France after the Liberation called itself "Association of Tenants and Landlords of Good Faith" ("good faith" meaning that these people had bought confiscated Jewish property on the assumption that its owners or their representatives had been disposed of forever). This was symptomatic of the fact that concrete, material interests could indeed rally fascist sympathizers in France, but also that ideology played a negligible role.

ELSEWHERE in Western Europe, from Norway to Belgium, the situation is about the same as regards the countries that were occupied by the Nazis. Italy is the only exception. Founded in 1946, the Italian Social Movement (MSI), which openly calls itself "neo-fascist," was able to win more than 14 per cent of the votes in the scattered municipal elections of May 1952. These results can be more correctly appreciated by looking back at Italy in 1947. When the MSI was still unknown, a party with the absurd name of Uomo Qualunque ("Party of the Common Man"—it would be hard to imagine a political party in any other country choosing such a banal title for itself) polled more than 20 per cent of the votes in certain areas. Uomo Qualunque disappeared as fast as it had appeared, but its supporters were inherited by the MSI and they contributed greatly to the latter's success in the May elections, which only shows how genuine their fascist zeal is.

The MSI has the outspoken backing of a great number of university and college students, and has won over an important minority of the farm laborers—especially in Southern Italy—who are disappointed by the inadequate agrarian reforms effected so far by the present government. This party expresses for the most part, however, an irritated nationalism that is inspired more by sentimental nostalgia than by a real will to action. Its leaders include—in addition to de Marsanich (who happens to be the

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Gentile uncle of Alberto Moravia, the famous half-Jewish Italian novelist)—Prince Borghese, who led Mussolini's shock troops under the "Social Republic" of 1943-45, and the aging Marshal Graziani.

SINCE neo-fascism has been formed by ideas essentially Nazi in character, it stands to reason that a leading role would be played by its German wing. In Western Germany itself the Nazi heritage was rather openly claimed by a party formed in 1949 under the name of Sozialistische Reichspartei (SRP) whose platform called for a "German" socialism, the "subordination of the individual to the common good," and the restoration of Germany's 1939 frontiers. This party also manifested a pronounced hostility to the West in general, and the United States in particular. Headed by Count Wolf von Westarp and Dr. Fritz Dorls (see Norbert Muhlen's "In the Backwash of the Great Crime," COMMENTARY, February 1952), its best-known propagandists were Roessler-Richter, K. H. Priester, and General Otto Remer, whose chief claim to glory is that he thwarted the anti-Hitler coup of July 20, 1944. Modeling itself along the lines of Hitler's party, the SRP had various auxiliary organizations of a para-military character such as a Reichsfront, with membership limited to former servicemen from the ages of twenty-one to thirty, and a Reichsjugend for younger men.

In September of this year the SRP voluntarily dissolved itself after three years of existence in the open—and after a violent faction fight in which Westarp accused Dorls of having taken Communist money, and was expelled from the party when a majority of the leadership ruled that this charge was unfounded. The SRP gave as its reason for dissolution the alleged capture of its membership lists by the government of Soviet-controlled East Germany. But no one took this explanation seriously, coming as it did from men who on several occasions had betrayed suspicious connections with the Communists. It is believed that the real reason for the party's dissolution was the threat of its suppression by act of the High Court of the Bonn republic, and also, perhaps, the advantages these epigones of Hitler hoped to gain by putting their main emphasis on underground activity while at the same time continuing to carry on in public behind the façade of a more moderate political program and under a different party name.

The SRP had first won worldwide attention when it received 11 per cent of the votes during the local elections in Lower Saxony in May 1951. Contrary to what might have been supposed, the bulk of this support did not come from the refugees expelled by the Russians from the old German border territories in the East, or from the unemployed and other such elements. The party scored its biggest successes in the northern part of Lower Saxony, a region of large and middle-sized farms where, in four electoral districts, it polled relative majorities, while it failed utterly in the more industrialized southern part of the province. The most likely explanation for this lies in the fact that the Third Reich particularly favored the farmers and peasants of Germany, who held a privileged position as symbols of *"Blut und Boden"*; hence regret for the past, rather than present despair or economic distress, is what seems to have motivated the votes of the farmers of Lower Saxony.

The immediate and long-range prospects of neo-Nazism in Germany were well assessed by former High Commissioner McCloy in his *9th Quarterly Report on Germany*, dated February 1952: ". . . the danger of the extreme right is not of a critical nature and—at least in the form of the SRP—does not constitute an immediate threat to the Federal Republic, but there is a potential danger whose nature and importance warrant continued vigilance. The SRP organizational nuclei, which are dotted all over the country, might at a later date expand and grow, should the political climate become suitable for their development."

The results of a public opinion survey recently undertaken by the occupation authorities are also illuminating. The question,

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"What would be your attitude if the Nazi party or a similar party came back into power in Germany?" was answered as follows: "I wish it would happen"—13 per cent; "No opinion"—14 per cent; "It would leave me indifferent"—23 per cent; "I don't want it to happen, but I wouldn't do anything to prevent it"—30 per cent.

THE international propaganda of the neo-fascists originates largely in Germany. The Malmö delegates and a number of their sympathizers like Hans Grimm, Alfred Fabre-Luce, SS-General Ramcke, and even von Ribbentrop's widow, appear as contributors in a magazine called *Nation Europa* in the strange company of a few decent people who, apparently, were taken in (André Philip, Arnold Toynbee, Denis de Rougemont, Ortega y Gasset). On the evidence, one can say conclusively that *Nation Europa* is the principal mouthpiece of European neo-fascism. It is published in Coburg, in Germany, and has offices in Sweden, Holland, Belgium, and Switzerland; an Italian edition, *Europa Nazione,* comes out intermittently in Rome.

As its title itself indicates, *Nation Europa* supports the idea of a federated Europe. In an important article in the December 1951 number, someone named Heinrich Sanden suggests a united Europe with "a political headquarters that would incorporate a military command as well as [over-all] economic and transportation authority. Each country would delegate only one representative: in the deliberative stages, his influence would depend on the force of his personality, but in the voting he would have a number of votes proportionate to the population he represented." The author develops this project in much detail, and even foresees new railroad systems with wider rails "such as Hitler planned, the first of which, between Munich and Marseilles, was to have been built in cooperation with France."

Herr Sanden, it is obvious, chooses his examples calculatedly. It is not surprising, therefore, to read in another number of *Nation Europa*—November 1951—that "the Schuman plan is nothing but a modernized annexation of German provinces, the continuation of Richelieu's policy."

But might not the French fascists be offended by such statements? One of the most notorious of French collaborators, Abel Bonnard—once a member of the Académie Française and now a refugee in Spain—takes it upon himself to explain how national and European patriotism can be reconciled: ". . . the various patriotisms will unite in the constitution of Europe by exalting rather than weakening themselves, just as each color finds its highest intensity in the rainbow while blending with the other colors. The rainbow is the banner of Europe, and it has always been a symbol of peace," etc., etc. (*Europa Nazione,* February-March 1951.)

This new Europe will be independent, apparently, of its "American educator." In one number after another of *Nation Europa,* contributors express their extreme scorn for American policies—"Roosevelt and his advisors plunged their country into a war that had nothing to do with the interests of the United States"—and their contempt for the American government as such—"that mixture of immaturity and decomposition." What's wrong with the United States is democracy; "in Europe vast sections of the population feel revulsion at the decay of parliamentary democracy." And so on.

The magazine has, however, to soft-pedal certain implications of its general position. It is still impossible in Europe today to preach openly the doctrine of a superior race called on by destiny to rule over other races. But one can hint at such ideas in discussing certain specific political problems—for example, the question of colonialism.

A "Eurafrican empire" happens to be the most cherished of all the ideas put forth by *Nation Europa,* and the largest part of its November 1951 number is devoted to that dream, with Oswald Mosley, in an article entitled "The European Homeland and African *Lebensraum,*" describing its general perspectives: "Our living space comprises two essential areas. The first is the

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European East: it belongs to the Occident, not the Orient, and we demand its restoration. . . . The second is Africa. Its development is the new and decisive task that faces a unified Europe. . . . Its administration will be carried out in the name of white civilization, whose duty is to develop rich countries for the sake of European well-being, and not to preserve the jungle. . . ." Other contributors insist even more outspokenly on "the white man's burden" and the rights that derive from it.

In view of this it is not surprising that Dr. Malan of South Africa should be the contemporary statesman most enthusiastically acclaimed by the magazine: "Dr. Malan is pursuing a consistent policy in order to consolidate systematically the position of the European man in his country. This policy has been frequently and sharply criticized all over the world, and especially in the British press. Despite all these attacks, Dr. Malan has stood his ground . . . and the important fact is that in South Africa a statesman with Western ideas is thinking about the future on a vast scale; this is a fact that concerns not only the Germans but all Europeans!" (February 1951.) In the November 1951 number, H. Vedder, a South African senator, writes: "Frightful lies have been circulated through the world on the subject of *Apartheid,* and even German newspapers violently attack Dr. Malan as though he intended to enslave the natives. Actually, all he wants to do is grant Blacks and Whites that which rightfully belongs to them, but he does not want to see the Blacks ape the Whites." And Mr. Vedder goes on to make an anti-Semitic point: "Because the Blacks, very numerous in the Cape, have the right to vote together with the Whites, Sam Kahn, a Communist Jew, and Mrs. Ballinger, a Communist Jewess, were sent to Parliament by Negro votes. . . ." (Neither Mr. Kahn nor Mrs. Ballinger, it should be pointed out, is a Communist. The former is actually known for his energetic anti-Communism in the trade unions.)

Franco is the only other contemporary statesman beside Malan to win the esteem of *Nation Europa.* Pierre de Nointel, presenting Franco to the magazine's readers in its October 1951 number, writes, somewhat guardedly: "Franco's regime cannot be regarded as fascist, because it does not depend exclusively on a single political party. The Western powers are well aware that the Caudillo is very popular, even in the industrial areas in the north of Spain." If the Spanish question has not yet been solved it is because of the hostility in the United States of a "coalition of Puritans, members of the Mosaic faith, and Freemasons." In the same number of the magazine, Carlo Rigo unabashedly calls Mussolini "one of the last great Europeans." Hitler, on the other hand, is generally praised in an allusive way, by being compared, for instance, with Napoleon, who for his part, too, wanted to unify Europe.

All this should be enough to show that *Nation Europa*'s program boils down to a second edition of Hitler's, adapted to a different time and with some of its touchier items muted. This is particularly true as regards the Jews. It is typical of present-day Europe, which is still haunted, as it were, by the ghosts of six million victims, that the most vicious anti-Semites often begin their declarations of faith by prefixing a statement on the order of "Personally, I'm not anti-Semitic, but—." *Nation Europa* conforms to this practice. "Until 1945 I was not an anti-Semite either in private life or my writings," states Hans Grimm, the notorious German nationalist writer and Nazi fellow-traveler, in the December 1951 issue —but, he adds, "a certain American Jewry" (not the "native Americans") had his latest book banned in Austria. And the prohibition against wearing the Iron Cross in Germany was motivated by the "senile hatreds of the Old Testament." As for Allied postwar policy, Arthur Ehrhardt, the editor himself, writes in the September 1951 number that ". . . the Morgenthau trust was the real wielder of power. It dreamed of only one thing: bloody revenge; the fate of Europe was as indifferent to it then as it is today."

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The creation of the State of Israel was "bloodied by cruel massacres" (October 1951). In the main, there is an effort to insinuate that the Jews were the chief guilty parties, and the Germans the chief victims, and to deny as much as possible the massacres perpetrated by the Nazis. On this score the palm goes again to Hans Grimm, who brings off a curious feat of rhetoric:

"The Germans themselves admit that the massacre of Jews in the East constituted an odious cruelty, even if it was only a matter of a million and a half people instead of six million as claimed; far more Germans were killed in the insane expulsions from the East, but that doesn't in the least alter the fact that the massacre of millions of Jews, even if there were only six hundred thousand instead of six million as claimed, constituted a terrible act of inhumanity."

BY WHAT ties are the official spokesmen of the various neo-fascist parties connected with their prospective future leaders who are now still in exile, living incognito, or otherwise concealed? For the present spokesmen of neo-fascism cannot, save in a few cases, be considered its real leaders. This is a delicate question if there ever was one. To raise the scarecrow of "hidden powers" without sufficient proof is a serious matter; and unfortunately, since the information I give below stems largely from official or unofficial secret service sources, it is unverifiable to start with. But the whole question seems serious enough to condone the use of such material.

The German SRP, the Italian MSI, and the fascist organizations of other countries of Western Europe were represented in full force at Malmö. They are also fully represented in the pages of *Nation Europa*. This kind of representation costs a lot of money. One runs across the names of well-known industrialists—Wolff in France, Torlonia, Pignatelli, Colonna in Italy—when looking for the backers of neo-fascism. Their German counterparts are harder to pin down, for industrialists whose names were linked with fascist causes in the past now prefer to adopt pseudonyms when making contributions to the political causes they favor.

False names in general pop up the moment one begins to investigate the situation further. Thus one Albertini, a former aide of the notorious French collaborator Marcel Déat, who was condemned to five years in prison, has visited Argentina on several occasions under a false name, and was received by President Perón. The ubiquitous Otto Skorzeny shuttles back and forth between Madrid and Germany under a pseudonym; and Walter Schellenberg, former head of Bureau VI (Foreign Information) of the Main Reich Security Office under Hitler, also makes frequent incognito trips to Spain. But in the opinion of those professionally in the know, the most important role in all this surreptitious activity belongs to Rudolf Rahn, a former Nazi diplomat whose last post was that of German emissary to Mussolini's "Social Republic."

As a young career diplomat and party member, Rahn did not make the impression of being a really zealous Nazi. But he was intelligent, personable, and above all ridden with ambition: his rapid rise during the war was unequaled among the diplomats of the Third Reich. When he was second secretary of the German embassy in Paris in 1940, he successfully carried out some very delicate missions involving intrigue in French Syria and Tunisia, attracting the personal attention of Hitler, who decorated him with the *Ritterkreuz mit Schwertern*. Subsequently Rahn was the last German ambassador to Hungary, where he supervised the "liquidation" of the Horthy regency, and he finally became Hitler's special envoy to Mussolini, at which post he remained until Germany's collapse—and he stated that fact before the Nuremberg Tribunal, not without wit, as having made him the "bankruptcy receiver" of the Third Reich's diplomacy. But leopards don't change their spots so easily, and it would seem that this "bankruptcy receiver" is now rather busy launching new political ventures. Reliable authorities say that at the present moment Rahn is the *eminence grise* behind the Verband Deutscher Soldaten, an

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outfit that includes the great majority of German veterans' organizations. He is also known to travel frequently between Germany and Spain, and has apparently had several audiences with Franco. The main purpose of these missions, according to informed sources, is "the liberation of funds to be used throughout Germany and countries formerly under German occupation to sustain both propaganda movements and agitators." Rahn now has a particularly convenient commercial façade for his activities since some months ago he became director of the German Coca-Cola company.

Yet it is hardly likely that Rahn in person is the hidden master-mind of the neo-fascist international, or even the sole representative of any such master-mind. During gestation, movements of this kind inevitably give birth to a number of contending cliques. Particular account, as a possible center of power in the neo-fascist international, must be taken of the important Nazi colony in Argentina, which enjoys the protection of President Perón, and probably is kept in touch with Europe by agents whose names are unknown to us. What does seem indisputable is the existence of close connections between the administrators of certain hidden funds in Spain, Argentina, and Germany itself, and the instigators of a propaganda that is becoming louder and more aggressive every day.

As we have seen, the term "neo-fascism" is really a screen for German neo-Hitlerism, pure and simple, transposed on a European-wide scale. If, at some future date, a united Europe were to materialize, Germany's influence would inevitably be preponderant because of her industrial capacity and dynamism. Thus Germany, more than any other country, holds the key to the whole problem. If, within the framework of a united Europe, a Westarp or a Remer were to come to power in Germany, then a de Marsanich would triumph soon enough in Italy, and a Bardèche in France. Inversely, any success won by the Italian or French neo-fascists would have a highly favorable effect on the chances of German fascism. Nevertheless, in the long run Germany will remain the crucial area. As for the danger inherent in this fact, one can only repeat the extremely circumspect opinion expressed by former High Commissioner McCloy: "The danger . . . is not of a critical nature . . . but there is a potential danger whose nature and importance warrant continued vigilance. . . ."

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A MYSTIC PHILOSOPHER ON EAST BROADWAY

The Life and Studies of S. H. Setzer

HERBERT WEINER

"FOUR there were who entered *pardes*—the 'garden' of the esoteric—Ben Azzai, Ben Zoma, Acher, and Akiba. Ben Azzai looked and died. Ben Zoma looked and went mad. Acher became an apostate. Only Rabbi Akiba entered in peace and came out in peace." So does the Talmud warn those who are tempted to study the Cabala, that body of esoteric tradition and teaching which would lift the veil from the mysteries of life and creation.

The most sacred book of the Cabala is the Zohar, which means the "Radiance" or "Shining." Cabalists claim that the book was revealed in the 2nd century C. E. to Rabbi Simeon ben Yohai while he hid in a cave from the Romans, who then controlled Palestine. Most modern scholars, more skeptical, detect evidence of medieval authorship. They assert that most of the book was written by a Hebrew literary figure of 13th-century Spain, who merely credited his own work to the 2nd-century rabbi in order to enhance the value of the copies he was trying to sell. Whatever the authorship, the book has been sanctified by centuries of Jewish tradition as one of the holiest writings, almost equal in importance to the Bible and the Talmud. Its interpretation of the inner meaning of the Bible, and its own mystic doctrines, have lifted the souls and made fertile the imaginations of mystery-seekers of all religions.

The Zohar has been translated into a number of languages, including Latin, French, and English,* and it has been commented upon extensively. Yet there are very few today who can claim to grasp the deeper meanings of its imagery and symbolism. One of these is a man who studies the Zohar in the evenings in a basement office on East Broadway. He is one who both understands and is able to communicate the Cabala's insights in a fashion intelligible to a modern mind. His name is S. H. Setzer.

JEWISH tradition sets three qualifications for him who yearns to wander in the "garden" of the esoteric: that "his stomach be filled" with knowledge as well as food, that he be more than forty years of age, and that he be married. S. H. Setzer eats very little and sometimes forgets to eat at all, but his "stomach is filled" with the vast literature and thought of Judaism. And he is seventy-six years old, considerably past the minimum required. However, as a bachelor, he has sidestepped the third provision, which would confine the heady and sometimes erotic dimensions of this exalted atmosphere to those who are well fastened to the earth connubially.

If, nevertheless, this East Side scholar has been able to avoid the emotional pitfall which Cabala presents to the unmarried, he owes this, he might well say, to a highly disciplined and rationalistic mind—and then

* *The Zohar*, an English translation in five volumes, was issued by the Soncino Press (London) in 1931-34, and reprinted in 1951.

THOUGH our universities, seminaries, and foundations often seem to forget it, the house of learning, both Jewish and "general," builds itself on this rock: one man studying one book. HERBERT WEINER, one of our younger rabbis, heard of one such surviving Cabalistic "learner" of the great tradition, and conceived the idea of studying with him; to this venturesome inspiration we owe the portrait we here present of S. H. Setzer. In a basement on East Broadway, this devoted scholar, mystic, and original thinker has been giving years of unremitting study to the understanding of the Zohar, the great book of Jewish mysticism. Rabbi Weiner's charge is Temple Israel in South Orange, New Jersey; he is the author of *A Sabbath Handbook* (1951), and has published articles in *The Reconstructionist*. He was born in Boston in 1919, and attended the University of Massachusetts, the Jewish Institute of Religion, and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Selections from the Zohar, with an introduction by Rabbi Weiner, appear this month in our "Cedars of Lebanon" department, page 486.

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again, he might remind us, the Zohar itself reflects and encourages, not the senseless irrational, but the higher rationality. For Jewish mysticism, Setzer maintains, is not a flight either from reason or from the observed world, but only a more sensitive form of observation, revealing a domain outside the world for which science seeks to account. It is a world whose facts and laws are not open to the casual observer, but it is also not completely closed. To this world the mystic is peculiarly sensitive. At times he senses its reality directly. More often, he apprehends its "will" through the interstices of the ordinary facts and accidents of life. In what to somebody else will seem an insignificant accident, the mystic may catch a glimpse of some higher design unraveling itself through the unconscious medium of seemingly purposeless events. This thinking, which is part of what Setzer calls his "mystic philosophy" of life, pervades all aspects of his own life—even a phone call, as I discovered.

When I first called him and tried to make an appointment to discuss the possibility of our studying together, I got a quick refusal and was referred to some articles he had published in a Hebrew journal. I persisted, and on my third telephone call Setzer invited me to his office. He later explained that his "mystic philosophy" had caused this change of mind: when a call comes in as often as three times, it is possible that "they" are involved and are trying to carry out some design. "They" is Setzer's familiar way of referring to the hidden but ultimately controlling powers of the "other" domain.

"THEY" having seemed to indicate that a visit from me was in order, I went to find the office on East Broadway. I saw him through the basement window before I entered, bent over a litter of books and papers. When he rose to open the door he seemed very tall, but it was mostly his extreme thinness and his very long face that gave the illusion of height. His suit was brown, ancient, and formless, and in sharp contrast with the frayed but clean and starched shirt. He seemed tired, and his discolored nose and red-rimmed eyes showed that he was suffering a cold. Despite his extended hand and high-pitched, tense greeting, he appeared somewhat unfriendly and suspicious and he motioned me to a chair near the table. I proceeded to explain my presence by telling him I had heard of his unusual understanding of the Zohar and wondered if he would be willing to make professional arrangements for teaching me.

He ignored my proposal but grunted at the word "understanding." "Yes, understanding," his long face twisted in bitterness, "they all talk and write about it, but the Zohar is the only book that people dare to translate without understanding it. Thirty years ago, I spoke with Ginsburg—you know the famous Ginsburg who wrote the articles on Jewish mysticism in the *Encyclopedia.* Even then he said to me"—here he imitated Ginsburg's voice—"Of course Mr. Setzer, I haven't read in the Zohar as much as you." He grunted again. "*Then* he hadn't read as much as I have—and that was thirty years ago, yet. He tried later to get me a subsidy for work on the Zohar."

He seemed to warm up a bit at his recollection of this compliment and absentmindedly accepted the cigarette I offered him. He broke it in two, placing one half in his upper jacket pocket and pushing the other into his cigarette holder.

"No," he finally returned to my proposal, "I haven't the time to give lessons in the Zohar. Years ago I gave them a chance. It's one of our precious pearls, one of the most beautiful treasures of the Jewish spirit, and they know nothing about it at the seminaries. We have such big schools, why shouldn't one of them have at least a chair in Jewish mysticism?"

He went on brooding over the Jewish institutions, and over their neglect of both Cabala and Setzer, until it was time for me to leave. He did agree, however, to see me again, specifying that I must come only in the evening, after seven. Later I learned the reason for his unusual working hours. Years ago, after a long siege of illness, Setzer had found himself without an office. A charitable organization, which leased the premises on East Broadway, agreed to keep his books and provide him with a temporary address until he located himself. Since then Setzer has spoken often about moving, but it is almost twenty years now that the arrangement has persisted. This office is available to him only in the evening, after the paying

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tenants have left. Necessarily, he has developed an unusual schedule, commuting from Seagate in farthest Brooklyn in the evening and returning there in the early hours of the morning. The people who use the office during the day have become accustomed now to seeing the shelves crammed with pamphlets and books, though Setzer tries to clean and brush the table before he leaves.

It was, then, at seven o'clock the next evening that I went to the "office" again. I was received a little more warmly. Setzer again began with complaints, this time about the difficult circumstances that kept him from working properly. He showed me the shelves piled high with thousands of copies of *Das Wort,* a magazine he writes, publishes, addresses, stamps, and mails once a month to the surviving members of the Setzer Pen Club. "Look," he pointed to the debris, "how can I do anything here? It's all so mixed up. I just have no time. Last week I got an order from a man who wants some of my books at a discount. Who can bother? I told him to take his own discount."

I offered my help in cleaning up the office. He seemed to respond, and I began to hope that I might yet again broach the subject of our studying together.

I told him that he should certainly be teaching the Zohar in a Jewish institution, but, unfortunately, the only institution whose support I could personally obtain was my own temple. I was, unhappily, being facetious, and was about to continue and suggest private instruction, but he surprised me by saying, "*Nu*—so all right—so let them do it. Only put a notice in the papers and send a notice about the class to the Hebrew journals." I was somewhat taken aback by this sudden turn and expressed some doubts about the attendance that could be secured for a class in the Zohar, to be conducted in Hebrew and Yiddish, at a Reform temple. Setzer reassured me: "Just announce it in the papers. Don't worry, the name of S. Setzer is not so unknown."

The announcements were duly made and the class began on schedule at the temple. Setzer was the teacher and I was the sole pupil. He made no comment, but turned to the first page of the Zohar and we began our studies together.

"'As a lily among the thorns,' the Zohar begins, quoting from the Song of Songs," he said. "What is this lily? It is the community of Israel. Even as the lily among the thorns is tinged with red and white, so in the community of Israel there are the qualities of justice and mercy. And even as the lily has thirteen leaves, so . . . ." Setzer read the portions and then slowly began to outline some of the ideas that underlie the writings of the Zohar.

The central theme of the Zohar, he explained, is the mystery of the Creator and the Creation, and the relationship between them. The mystery of an infinite God cannot, of course, be fully fathomed by a finite mind, yet questions can be asked. And these very questions imply some knowledge. Thus to ask "What?" already implies a certain degree of knowledge. To analyze further the nature of "what" is to reveal the existence of a non-mechanical personal power, and thus to replace the "what" with a "who." To go further into the nature of the "who" makes even this pronoun inadequate for the reality. So the "who" falls away, and there remains only a soundless question without a word to express it. Yet even in this question, which is more akin to awe and inarticulate wonder, there is still implied a certain knowledge of the existence and nature of Something.

But how can we finite creatures know anything about that infinite which is ultimately responsible for our existence?

The unspoken but necessary assumption is, Setzer went on to expound, that in every creation a creator reveals something of his personality. It may be much or little, but the creation, having been touched by the creator, must bear his stamp. On the basis of this assumption, the Zohar tries to move by speculation from the microcosm of man and nature in their creative functioning to the macrocosm of God and his process of Creation.

Thus this book, drenched in piety and spirituality, has much of that erotic symbolism which is always to be found in profound mysticism. It sees a linkage between the creative process (as it occurs in nature and in man) and the Creator. It is concerned, said Setzer, with the dialectics of the tensions, antagonisms, and oppositions which

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necessarily precede all synthesis and creative unifications. It is concerned with the mystery of the nothing becoming something, and tries again and again to probe this mystery by drawing analogies from the manner in which an immaterial thought or urge in a human being becomes real, becomes even flesh and blood. Thus the Zohar contains deep and subtle psychology and philosophy as well as poetic flights of the religious soul.

SETZER was a tactful teacher, not avoiding the erotic explanations without which the Zohar cannot be understood, but communicating them always on their spiritual as well as physical levels. He spoke in a mixture of English, Hebrew, and Yiddish, and often his sentences would trail off into a gesture or an allusion. But gradually the symbolism became meaningful and what at first was only poetic imagery—a tree and its fruit, the moon and its light, a word and its significance when the letters were reversed—all these became concepts and ideas, psychological and philosophical truths equally valid on many different levels. All the levels—biological, sociological, psychological, philosophical—all were merged in the words of the Zohar like "the links of many chains all connected with each other so that when one link is touched, all respond." Thus, the Biblical phrase in the story of the creation —"the tree of life yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself"—referred literally to the story of creation, but it is equally significant, he pointed out, on other levels: the tree and the seed symbolize the physical creative process in man; they refer also to the intellectual and spiritual fructification of a human being by the "seed" of the Divine wisdom; the passage hints also at the way in which all cosmic creation takes place, the mysterious process by which "fruit" comes from seed and seed comes from intangible thought, and thought from the realm of the unknown and the unknowable.

Setzer took great pride in being able to formulate and communicate the subtle and slippery thoughts of the Zohar. But once in a while his satisfaction at the successful elucidation of a passage was alloyed with some bitterness. After a particularly difficult portion he would look up to see if the extent of his accomplishment was sufficiently appreciated. "*Nu*," he would ask, "now you understand, yes? On this point the Ari and the Cordovero [great medieval commentators on the Zohar] struggled and struggled and finally came up with nothing. It took me thirty years to understand it, and now I've given it to you in five minutes." There seemed a note of regret at his parting so easily with the knowledge so painfully acquired.

A similar bitter irony colors his feelings about his fine collection of books on Cabala. The thought of leaving the books to an institution—one of the institutions that had been so indifferent to him—pained him. He talked facetiously about how he wished he could somehow take the books with him, and he spoke without facetiousness about trying to make a commercial arrangement with some hotel owner: he was willing to exchange the books, which he estimated were worth about three thousand dollars, for three years of board and room. It would be a good risk for the hotel, he pointed out, for if he died before the three years, the books would still go to the hotel and they would profit on the arrangement. He was sure that many a hotel owner would be interested in the proposal.

This jealous possessiveness of his hard-won knowledge makes him reluctant to write articles on the Cabala. "Why should I give it to them so easily?" Yet he is far from miserly with his meager material possessions. Apart from a small subsidy from a foundation, and a few dollars garnered from an occasional published article, or the sale of some of his old books, Setzer has almost no income. But he responds to every monetary appeal that comes to him, and always distributes some charity on the eve of the High Holidays. With his spiritual and intellectual "capital" he parts only reluctantly.

IF SETZER is bitter surely it is understandable. He has been a writer for well over fifty years. In Europe he was literary editor of one of the first Hebrew quarterlies and one of that dedicated circle that helped to bring about a renaissance of the Hebrew language. His name and his articles are known to almost every reader of the Jewish and Hebrew press, and he has published over a dozen well-received books on Jewish history and thought. For several decades

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now, he has written and published a Hebrew and Yiddish pamphlet on a monthly basis, sending it out to subscribers throughout the world. In spite of all this, he finds himself today in that meager, borrowed office on East Broadway. The labor of writing, addressing, and mailing his pamphlets is becoming burdensome, even though he has worked out a system whereby his time is not completely wasted: he places a large folio of the Talmud on his left and has trained himself to read from it while automatically addressing and stamping the pamphlets piled on his right.

Still the feeling of frustration gnaws. More and more of the pamphlets mailed to members of the Setzer Pen Club come back marked "addressee deceased" or "unknown," and most of the two hundred and fifty remaining recipients have for years neglected to send in their three-dollar subscriptions. Even that small satisfaction which used to be his at being recognized by the Yiddish and Hebrew readers of the neighborhood seems to have disappeared. Some time ago a bearded rabbi of the neighborhood walked into the basement office in error, and happened to notice that Setzer was bent over the sacred text of the Zohar and was not wearing the usual head covering. He didn't recognize Setzer and began to rebuke him for lack of reverence in handling so sacred a text without proper respect. He received a sharp and ready answer: "You are the one who should be ashamed, not me. You come in and see somebody sitting alone and studying Torah for the honor of Torah. You don't think to yourself how good it is that in these days it is still possible to find a man who sits alone at night and studies the Holy Word. All you can think about is a hat." Though he tells this story with evident delight, Setzer was hurt by the stranger's lack of recognition.

SETZER was born in Novogrod-Volhynsk in the Ukraine, the cradle of the Hasidic movement which, originating in the early 18th century, sought to bring a new enthusiasm and immediacy to Jewish piety; perhaps this is why Setzer has always been attracted to the mystic stream in Jewish life. In an environment abundant with keen Talmudists, he was early recognized as an *ilui*—a child prodigy—and went on to further study at the Talner Klaus in his native town. Here his reputation as an unusually brilliant student brought him the friendship of a man who remains warm in his memory to this day: Mordecai Zeeb Feierberg, the leader and intellectual spokesman of the "enlightened" Jewish youth of that period. Feierberg had written a semi-autobiographical novel in Hebrew, entitled *Whither,* in which he described the searchings of a soul that had been uprooted from the soil of traditional Judaism but was unable to place its roots elsewhere, and was therefore disintegrating. Feierberg's laments found an echo in the hearts of many of the *"Maskilim,"* as they came to be known. The word literally means the "enlightened," but the poet Bialik, himself one of the Maskilim, more aptly termed them "children of the dusk," for they were born after the sunset of one world, and before the sunrise of another. One of the objectives of the Maskilim in Novogrod-Volhynsk was the "capture" of brilliant young Talmudists like Setzer. Feierberg accomplished it: the yeshiva student became a leader of the young intellectuals.

The days in Novogrod-Volhynsk were days of excitement and happiness, full of study and enthusiastic discussion of all subjects. Setzer developed a reputation for a sharp and slashing style in both the spoken and written word, and he came to be known far beyond the local environs for his angry attacks on the philosophies of Ahad Ha'am and Spinoza. Toward Spinoza he was particularly bitter. "I could never forgive him," he recalls now, "his scraping and bowing before Christianity, his constant attacks on Judaism and his apologies for Christianity. I could never forgive him his lack of feeling for the martyrdom of the Jews which he himself saw. And I had no respect for him because he borrowed much of his philosophy from the atmosphere and thought of the Zohar—and never acknowledged or mentioned it by a single word."

Setzer's literary star rose rapidly when he went to Zhitomir, and later to Warsaw. All those days were more than days of success: they were filled with warm and stimulating comradeship. "We used to go walking in the evenings to the edge of the city and there in the fields carry on our dis-

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cussions till early morning. We would lie down for a few hours of sleep, only to rise again and continue the talk."

Setzer was with Feierberg at the hour of his death at the age of twenty-five and later was chosen to deliver the eulogy over his grave. The picture of his friend's end has remained deeply etched in Setzer's memory. During the last moments of Feierberg's life he asked Setzer for the time and Setzer, looking at the clock, saw that it had stopped. He did not tell this to his dying friend, for he remembered that the clocks had stopped also when the Baal Shem Tov, founder of Hasidism, died.

The coincidence impressed him deeply. Later, in one of the books which he published after his coming to America in 1912, Setzer described in detail the death of the Baal Shem as recorded by tradition. The Baal Shem had whispered to the disciples gathered around his bed that when both clocks in the house stopped, he would enter the next world. The disciples burst out into a wail, but the Baal Shem comforted them saying, "Let us better have a little *shmus* [a chat] with the Master," in this way indicating that it was time for daily prayer. After the prayer, the disciples saw that the small clock in the room had stopped and they quickly crowded in front of it lest the Baal Shem notice. Shortly afterwards, the Baal Shem was seized by great pain and began to murmur softly. When they bent down to hear what he was saying, they heard the words of the Psalm, "Lead me not to the foot of pride," and repeating these words, he died. At that moment, it was observed that the other clock in the hall had stopped.

Setzer also wrote a book about another great Hasidic leader, Rabbi Nahman of Bratzlav.* "Nahman," Setzer says, "was primarily a story-teller, a great literary talent. In order to express himself within his environment, he specialized, of course, in religious and moralistic tales, but primarily he was a literary genius, and he used to say that good story-telling could be a way of worshiping God." Setzer's large volume on the Bratzlaver was published in 1929, and shortly thereafter completely sold out. Setzer himself has only one copy left, and recently he inserted a number of advertisements in the newspapers offering to purchase a copy of his own book. When someone offered to sell him the book, but asked fifteen dollars for it, Setzer felt both outraged and complimented.

From time to time other advertisements appear in the newspapers under Setzer's name, offering his services as a lecturer. He suggests such themes as "Spinoza and the Zohar," "The Pythagorean Theory of Numbers," "A Page of the Pentateuch as Seen Through the Talmud," etc., etc. These are the lectures he delivered more than thirty years ago. There has been no response to these ads in more than twenty years. Nor, evidently, is Setzer eager to receive a response, for when I offered to arrange a lecture, he seemed uninterested.

As he looks back over his long life, two episodes stand out as particularly meaningful, not only because they were occasions when he was close to death, but because he was on both occasions particularly conscious of the intervention of "them"—of some higher design in the affairs of his life. Of course, the whole of life, as Setzer sees it, carries out a design and purpose of which we are not usually conscious. Even as a person who is under the influence of a post-hypnotic suggestion goes about his business for what he thinks are his own reasons, but is actually following a pull that is not revealed to him, so all the events of life are unconsciously carrying out the will of the hidden powers whom Setzer refers to as "them." Sometimes, however, "they" reveal their hand almost unmistakably.

The first occasion on which Setzer was almost perceptibly conscious of "their" guiding presence was during a pogrom in Zhitomir. He likes to blame that episode on the Western Jewish writer and Zionist Max Nordau. Setzer had read an essay of Nordau's on leadership in which the leader is described as one who is willing to go ahead of his people. So struck was Setzer with this simple and uncompromising definition that when an emissary was needed to approach the "pogromchiks" and attempt to dissuade them from their designs, he stepped forward. The Jewish youths were gathered at

* See Martin Buber's "Israel's Land: Habitation of God," in COMMENTARY, October 1951.

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one end of the street ready to protect themselves, and the mob was at the other end of the street, ready to attack. Setzer walked slowly toward them, and the closer he came to them the less optimistic he grew. "When I saw the violence in their faces, I knew it was no use, but I kept on walking." When he had come close enough, one of the mob stepped quickly forward and struck the emissary over the head with a heavy piece of wood. Later, they managed to bring Setzer to a doctor as the first pogrom casualty, and he found out that but for a fraction of an inch the blow would have been fatal. During that whole episode, however, Setzer had felt no fear. He simply had the feeling that "they" did not yet want him to die.

He had the same confidence and sense of "their" wanting him to live when, in 1914, he became ill with a rare disease that the doctors declared was incurable and fatal. The name of the disease was *myasthenia gravis* and Setzer was proud of the fact that it seemed to strike only millionaires and intellectuals. But he was not willing to accept the fatal prognosis of the doctors. "The first few months at the hospital they told me to lie still, and so I was still. I didn't want to cause them any bother. But then I saw that I wasn't getting any better and I said to myself, *'Vus, meshuga bin ich?'* Am I crazy, to die at such a young age? I just wasn't ready, that's all, and I began to tell them what I thought I needed. I told them to put me in the fresh air, and I told them what food I thought I needed. And then I began to use my will power. This is the key to my whole life: *akshonus*—stubbornness. Every day I took one more step until I finally walked out of the hospital. *Akshonus*—this has been the secret of all my studies and that is how I began to really understand the Zohar too. I just would not let a sentence or a phrase go without squeezing from it completely what it was trying to say."

It was during those many months in the hospital that Setzer again took up the Zohar, which he had not seriously read since his youth. Now he began to reread it, not only with the *akshonus* and iron will that he used in fighting his illness, but aided by the wide knowledge of formal philosophy that he had acquired since he had left the yeshiva. For the first time, the complex symbolism of the Zohar appeared to yield a logical meaning, and he discovered what seemed to him the key to its proper understanding. Contrary to the opinion of many who read and comment on it, this classic of mysticism was no dogmatic religious statement or religious mythology, but contained and reflected the classic philosophic problems which agitated both Arab and Christian scholars in the Middle Ages. Its thought was to be understood only by comparison with the Aristotelian and Neo-Platonic ideas of the time. It was concerned, like Spinoza and Kant, with the problems of substance and attribute, of noumena and phenomena, of the finite and the infinite, but, in Setzer's opinion, its subtle probing and analysis anticipated and went deeper than theirs.

Of course, the philosophical discussions of the Zohar are disguised by a complex symbolism which misleads the uninitiated. The author or authors of the Zohar, as pious Jews, were committed to the classic texts of their tradition and had to assume that they embodied all wisdom, even the wisdom of the philosophers. This meant that the ancient texts could not be discarded, but had rather to be so ingeniously interpreted that they revealed the desired meaning. The literal meaning of words was not disputed; as compared, however, to the inner, deeper truth, it was but as "clothes are to the body, or the body to the soul."

Not all of the Zohar is philosophy. In its pages there spring up the deeply repressed and subterranean currents of Gnosticism and mythology, disguised in forms and symbols that escape the reach of interdiction by the rabbis. Fancy and the dream at times burst away from the bonds of official doctrine, and the interpretation and text often seem connected by the thinnest of threads.

Setzer explains in interesting fashion these poetic excursions of the text. "If you were sleeping, and someone touched you lightly, but not enough to awaken you, then something in your dreams would reflect that touch. It would of course be reflected in your own dream language, but still it would be connected somehow with that touch. Often the Zohar is like that; Simeon ben

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Yohai or one of his comrades quotes a Biblical text and asks its secret. Then they seem to go off into a different world, with its own language and symbols, but it is yet connected with the original text, even as the dream is connected to the touch."

Setzer has written books not only on mystic themes, but also on problems of Jewish law and legend, and Jewish history. He has been several times awarded prizes in recognition of his creative scholarship in a wide number of fields. Of late, though, he has been drawn more and more to the elevated and mysterious world of the Zohar, to regions far removed from the multitudinous and distracting problems that go with the business of daily living.

THE wealth which the Torah promises its students is by no means exchangeable for rent and food, Setzer has found out. His needs are incredibly small. Besides his donations to charity and the rent for his room, and the small meal which is at times completely forgotten and never missed, he needs little. Yet his income does not quite match up to even these needs. Years ago, when he lived socially as well as intellectually, he needed and secured through his writings a much higher income. But at no time, despite his recognition and acceptance as a writer and scholar, was he free from the pressure of economic need. At times he has rebelled against this situation, and his attempts to achieve some financial independence, if not successful, were often ingenious, to say the least. One of these attempts Setzer describes now with a good deal of amusement, though he was quite serious at the time. That was when he decided, some fifteen years ago, to become a race-horse gambler.

"After all, I thought, why should it be so difficult? The Talmud is difficult; the Zohar is difficult; but why should it be so hard to make money if you really put your mind to it? So I decided to make money in a way that would leave me the maximum amount of time for my studies and writing. I developed a system for playing the horses. At first the system had a simple basis, though later I complicated it considerably. First, I assumed that they were all *ganovim,* all thieves. Second, I knew it had nothing to do with the *narishkeit* of tracks, clocking, and handicaps. After all, if you could win by studying these facts, everybody would win who just studied hard enough.

"In fact, I didn't pay attention at first to the horses at all, but to the owners. After all, I said to myself, these owners like Whitney and others, they have a reputation to keep up. They can't show their faces to their friends if they don't have a certain percentage of winners. With all their fixing, they still have to manage to win a certain number of times. So I used to watch the big owners and their stables all over the country, and after they had a losing streak, I began to play their horses. I used the same system with the jockeys. After all, they have to make a living, and their living depends on their reputations, so they too have to fix up a certain percentage of winners. Later I developed more complicated systems, but for two years I was able to keep ahead of them. I never played less than three hundred dollars a day and sometimes as much as a thousand." After two years, however, he wound up with as little money as he had begun with.

Recently the desire to "adjust his financial position" has flared up again.

It began with a recording machine I brought to his office to record the chanting of the Aramaic of the Zohar. Setzer was immediately interested in the machine and its possibilities. He wanted to hear how his voice sounded and brought down an old volume of *Das Wort* from some thirty years ago. He read some poems he had written. One began something like, "I am like a shadow . . . where others go, there am I and yet I am not"; another ended with a sentence about his desire to "dig a pit between himself and others." When we played back the recording, he was greatly pleased with the way his voice sounded and mentioned the possibility of preparing himself for some lectures with the aid of the machine. Later he asked if a smaller size couldn't be purchased that he might use at home.

"Sometimes a thought comes to my head," he explained, "even when I am shaving, and just the right way to put it into words. If the machine could be going I could catch it."

A few weeks later, he began work seriously recording a portion of the Zohar called "The Mystery of the Sabbath," a traditional

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selection which is reproduced in the prayer books of the Hasidim. It is a beautiful meditation on the "oneness" which unites all creation and integrates all souls on the Sabbath, and tells how only in such integration is there the fullest functioning of the creative flow, the fullest contact between Creator and Creation:

"The mystery of the Sabbath, the Sabbath . . . that unites itself through the mystery of the One. In order that it may be inspired by the mystery of the One to become as a reflection of Him. . . ."

Setzer spent many hours with the recorder trying to get all the proper nuances of the chant, and his voice was very pleasant to hear. When it was finished to his satisfaction, he announced that he was convinced of the commercial possibilities of a record carrying his version of "The Mystery of the Sabbath." The more he listened to his recording, the more enthusiastic he became, finally venturing the opinion that it was perhaps just for this purpose that we had been brought together.

Unexpressed was the thought: if not for this, then for what *did* "they" arrange our meeting? For indeed there had been no great change in Setzer's life and circumstances as a result of my phone call. We no longer spoke, as we did at the beginning, of publishing a full shelf of books on Jewish philosophy, or of arranging for courses on the Zohar sponsored by official institutions. Nevertheless, I expressed doubts as to the appeal of "The Mystery of the Sabbath" on the market place. Setzer remained unconvinced and decided to take the recording to a commercial radio station.

The officials of this station were under considerable obligation to him, for only a month before, without his permission, they had broadcast portions of his book on the Baal Shem Tov, and had remained noncommittal as regards financial compensation when Setzer finally asked them. Consequently, they were only too happy to make two records of his tape recording, and give them to him as a gift. At first, it seemed to Setzer, they were also interested in the commercial possibilities of the record. Upon further discussion, however, they seemed to lose their enthusiasm. Setzer somewhat suspects that they may still be interested but would like to find a way of issuing the record without giving him any share of the profits.

SINCE the recording machine was kept in my office in New Jersey, Setzer finally consented to visit with me for a weekend. Previously he had resisted my urging, claiming that he had given up all social engagements. "What do I need it for, the tenseness and the strain?" However, in order to complete his recording, he consented to come, and I picked him up Friday afternoon at his office. He was waiting, his overnight clothes packed in an ancient brief case, and he himself carefully dressed in a white and black checkered suit and straw hat. He noticed my interest in his suit and informed me that it was of the vintage of the 1920's when they really made good clothes. The suit attracted some attention in temple that evening, where I took him for services, not only because of its unusual if well-preserved style, but also because it had shrunk considerably around the ankles.

Most of the people at the temple, and especially the young matrons, were quite attentive to their unusual guest when coffee was served afterwards, and sat with him as he tasted various cakes pressed upon him by the hostesses. He seemed flustered but by no means displeased by all the attention. I wanted to protect him from "overstrain" in his first venture into social life in years, and when some people invited him out for ice cream, I put them off. Later, when we left the temple, he said to me in a rather hurt tone, "Why did you have to speak for me? It's been so many years since I've been out in company, we could have gone with them." I apologized, and my mind went back to the poem he had recited on the recording tape about "digging a pit between himself and others."

On another evening the words of that poem occurred to me again. Setzer was discussing the problem of the origin of evil according to the Cabala. The point of origin of evil, in the doctrine of the Cabala, he explained, occurs when there is separation and division. Of course, there must be such separation in the process of any creation. In the terminology of the Zohar, if the creative flow never ceases, there can never be any definite form, even as there is never

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form in that which has no limitation, which is not bounded and separated, so to speak, from other substance. Thus there must always be a holding back as well as a giving in creation if it is to be comprehended, for we comprehend and can deal only with that which is limited. Yet it is precisely when the creative flow and grace cease, even in the interests of creation, that evil has its origin. For evil is that which is present when the creative flow is absent. Evil is that which creeps in when the force that wants to give life must be limited. Evil arises when separation and division begin. On the other hand, only in the yearning for the fusion and unity of things, ideas, and people, is the higher truth and good approached. This is the mystic and also the practical theological and psychological meaning of the oneness which is stressed in the central phrase of Judaism: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One." It is this oneness of all reality and all dimensions of existence that is continually stressed in the mystic literature.

The words of his old poem and the incident at the temple came back to me as Setzer explained these matters. How is it possible to deal constantly with the theme of "oneness" and "togetherness," and yet remain a bachelor who wanted to "dig a pit between himself and others," and who would rather avoid the "strain" of social contact? Or again, in the puzzling dialectics of this world, who is more conscious of the need for fusion and togetherness than he who is gripped in that tension of separation and division?

Setzer would probably call his lonely walking through life "independence" rather than "separation." So eager is he to avoid troubling people that he will lie alone in his room through a week-long siege of illness rather than call for help. But this independence becomes more difficult with the years. He is not so sure as he used to be that he is not yet ready for death. He thinks frequently now of moving to Boston, where his only sister lives, but his reluctance to become a source of trouble to anybody is holding him back. He feels, however, that some change in his living habits must be made.

Last year there was a brief possibility that his problem would be solved. A rich Californian, who knew and admired Setzer's writings and scholarship, came to visit him. He spoke about a new Jewish institution of higher learning which was being formed in California, and proposed that Setzer take a position there which would give him both security and time for study. Setzer waited more than a year for the offer to materialize. "They may force me yet to become rich," was all he would hint. Then one day he disclosed the whole proposition bitterly: the man from California had died before completing the arrangements, and so Setzer remains in New York.

This event was only the latest in a long series of frustrations. The scholar's *akshonus* and iron will are still with him, but the daily ride from his room in Seagate to East Broadway is wearing. He has been ill and alone in his room a number of times this year, and lately his conversation has turned often to death. These discourses are philosophic soliloquies, and they come forth at the most unlikely moments. Recently a mutual friend, who had just returned from Israel, dined with Setzer and me. This friend began speaking of his trip. Soon we became conscious of the fact that Setzer was also speaking—but with no apparent attempt to participate in the general conversation. He was launched on one of his half-whimsical monologues: "I have come to the conclusion lately that something which is completely evil, or almost without any mixture of good, can exist with a strong will to life. For example a complete murderer or evil genius can have a powerful drive for life. But I don't think this is the case with a good person. He must have an admixture of evil to live and want to live strongly. If he loses it, then he is finished. I know myself that much of my striving and accomplishment and power come from my *yetzer hara,* my evil impulse. Until a few years ago, I used to bathe all year long in the ocean, even in the winter. It was healthy, but I know I did it also partly because I liked to show off a bit, and when I studied the Zohar, I was interested in it not only for its own sake, but also I wanted the satisfaction of knowing that nobody else knew it as well as I. Not that I wanted glory or some other reward, but I did want that satisfaction. The results were good, but it was the admixture of the evil

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impulse that gave me power. I think about it now because lately I just haven't been concerned with knowing more or less than the other person. The evil is weakening. It's not good."

He smiles himself at these little meditations, and yet he is rather serious about them. In fact, he has made some rather startling changes in the habits of his religious life. Since his early youth, Setzer has been unconcerned with the formal ritualistic observances of his tradition, though he is deeply religious in spirit. Whenever one asked why there was so little connection between his personal religious habits and his studies and interest in Jewish law, he would half avoid the question with the admonition to let ritual observances "come naturally without strain"—he liked to drop in on a synagogue when he was in the mood. But lately he has been saying the old prayers more regularly and, most surprising of all, he has resumed the practice of eating kosher food, something he had abandoned for over fifty years. In announcing his new dietary regime, he smiled almost apologetically, "After all, I'll have to meet the Cordovero and the Ari soon. *Nu,* about putting on *tefillin* and praying three times a day, they won't ask me. But to eat *treife,* it's just not nice." Again he smiled, but he was not unserious.

On the actual facts of life beyond death, Jewish tradition encourages little speculation, and even the mystics were not given to letting their minds dwell on the "world of truth"—as the life beyond life is called, in order to distinguish it from this world of "comparative truth." One evening, however, Setzer broke from the tradition and told me a strange story. We had been reading the Zohar at his office and the hour was sufficiently late for the neighborhood to be very quiet. It had become a custom for him to chant the Aramaic text, after which I translated. The passage we were reading described the mysterious appearance on earth of a famous scholar and saint, Rab Hamnuna, in the guise of a donkey driver. I translated: ". . . and Rabbi Eleazar and Rabbi Abba bowed before him, and then they saw him no more. They stood up, looked on all sides, but saw him no more. They sat and cried and could not talk one to the other. After an hour had passed, Rabbi Abba said, 'Is not this what we have learned, that in every path where good men travel, if the words of Torah are between them, then those who have already merited the next world, come before them. . . .'" I noticed then that Setzer's attention was no longer on the passage. He had risen from the table, and was walking back and forth in the quiet office as if trying to make a decision.

"It should be told in different circumstances," he suddenly began. "This is not the proper atmosphere, but I would like to tell you of an incident in my own life. You know, I am a rationalist, but still, if something actually happens to me, I have to accept it." It was almost midnight, and only the occasional sound of muffled footsteps on the pavement outside could be heard as he spoke.

"I had two sisters. One of them, about five years ago, became seriously ill. One day I was sitting alone in my room and suddenly . . . I am a rationalist, but still, it happened . . . I saw something dressed in black and it was my sister. She came close to me and kissed me, then suddenly she dropped away. Then I heard a voice very clear, whispering clearly in my ear, 'Your sister died, your sister died.' The whole next day I heard music, beautiful music of a song I used to know and like very much, but I can't recall it lately. I heard this music so loud and clear that I was sure it was a radio or something which the neighbors also heard, but I found out that they didn't. Then I got a telegram telling me that my sister had died. I figured out the time and hour and it was the exact moment when I had heard the whispering." He paused and sat down again to the Zohar. His long, thin face seemed softer and wearier. He didn't begin reading for a few minutes.

It may be that he was thinking about his sister who had passed away and of the mysteries that no mysticism could open up. Or perhaps he was trying to throw off the mood with a phrase of the Baal Shem Tov which he often repeats these days. "It is forbidden," commanded the Baal Shem, "to be old. One must continue always to make large plans and projects, to look to the future even as a youth."

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YET Setzer is seventy-six years old now. He has not lost the *akshonus* that has always driven him on, but the physical conditions in which he lives and works are not comfortable. He would like to spend less time now on the subway, and would like to worry less about getting out another article to bring in a little income. He would like to live some place where he would not be isolated in case of illness, though, of course, he wouldn't want to be in anybody's way or lose his independence. He would like to spend more and more time in the world of the brown leather volume which lies at the edge of his pamphlet-littered table—the book that opens up a warmer, softer world where the great "holy trees" of wisdom, Rabbi Simeon ben Yohai and his companions, walk and discuss the Torah and through their words seem to merge the boundaries of heaven and earth, of flesh and spirit.

I told him that I was writing this article about him and asked whether he cared to read it. He hesitated and then decided that it wouldn't be proper. He did suggest that "The Prayer of a Mystic," which he wrote in an essay on mysticism, be used. In this essay Setzer describes the mystic as being like the boy Samuel in the narrative of the Bible. The young lad heard a call, but at first refused to yield to its implications, for it seemed to be at variance with his reason and usual experience. But the voice called again, and then again, until he could not deny its reality. So it is with the mystic.

"And even as he [the mystic] attempted at first to be untouched by this other 'will' which wanted to place him under its rule, even as in the beginning he struggled stubbornly not to perceive the mystic truth which wanted to force itself upon him, so now he hastens to take upon himself the discipline of this will.

"Even as at first he made himself deaf and blind to the voice of God which had sounded in his ears, and to the signs and proofs which He had shown him, so now are his ears quickened all day to absorb the word of God that is sent to him, and his eyes are opened wide continually to the different signs shown him from the heavens.

"But his heart cries, within him he is filled with despair and his spirit is bent when it happens that at the moment of his sorrow, at the hour when he remains without guidance, and his soul knows not how to turn, and at a certain moment in life he finds it impossible to decide which path to take—that then, these wondrous hints for which he waits, which might guide him through his straits, fail to come.

"And at times it happens that the 'inspiration of spirit' which has been given him is not wholly removed. The different 'hints' for which he waits continue to appear to him. He still hears the voice of God reverberating in his ears. But it is impossible to fathom the meaning of these hints. It is impossible to combine the sounds into words. He knows they seek something from him but he knows not what they seek. And he summons all his strength and strains to lift the veil before him, but his effort peters out in confusion and emptiness. His striving leads him only to sadness of heart and hollowness of soul.

"And he feels crushed, desolate, and abandoned—and a prayer of the heart, broken and torn, bursts then from his mouth.

"'O cause the flow of Thy graciousness to descend upon me, and show me the way which is for me to follow. Enlighten, my God, my eyes, that they may see and understand Your wonders and signs; that I may know how to save my soul from the heaviness of this oppression which Thou layest upon me.

"'May the flow of blessing from above be drawn forth to descend upon me, that I may be able to do the will of my Father who is in heaven, that I may be able to properly assume the yoke of His kingdom, and fulfill all that He asks of me.

"'Grace me, my God, with the understanding and knowledge to find the meaning of the wonders and signs which I see, to comprehend the intent of all those things from out of which You speak.'"

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CROSS-TIDES OF NORTH AFRICAN REVOLT

A First-Hand Report on Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia

HERBERT LUETHY

THE history of civilization is also one of colonization—in every sense of that ancient word: settlement, clearing, land reclamation, cultivation, the founding of cities. Colonization is the revolutionary process of history itself, and since the Middle Ages it has transformed whole continents, destroyed or changed entire peoples, and brought all mankind into contact. This process has not been without tragedy; the clash of the new with the old has too often ended in the annihilation of the weaker, and older, party. And what was destroyed was not only crumbling, decadent social and cultural structures, but in many cases flesh and blood itself.

Nevertheless, not colonial rule as such is to be blamed for the decay, corruption, and anarchy that prevail today in almost every backward country; rather, industrialization, Western technology, and the rapacity of private economic interests—merchant adventurers, chartered companies, and the rest—brought this about before foreign political rule ever appeared on the scene. Usually, such rule represented an effort to impose order on the chaos resulting from private and purely economic colonialism.

The term "the white man's burden" was coined to denote this official assumption of responsibility by European governments for strange lands and peoples, and it has been regarded as the consummate expression of imperialist hypocrisy. But may it not be suggested, in retrospect, that a hundred years of British rule (1857-1947) did more for the development—and emancipation—of India than a hundred years of the "Open Door" policy for China? One of the hardest lessons for the partisans of "anti-imperialism" to learn is that colonialism in its purest and most "progressive"—i.e. non-political—form (that kind of economic development of backward countries envisaged by Point Four) produces results exactly the opposite of those hoped for. For what backward countries need most to insure their social and economic development, and for want of which they are "backward," is a tradition of government in the public interest. They lack, not simply a sufficient number of educated persons, but the very notion of public service and civic responsibility: the conviction that a public office is a trust and a duty, not just an opportunity for personal enrichment. This conviction is the artificial and fragile product of a thousand years of Western history, and it is infinitely more difficult to export than machines or credit. Also, without civic responsibility on the part of the recipient, machines and credit seldom arrive at their intended destination.

Colonialism originally meant colonization by settlement, where a third factor, the foreign settler, is placed between motherland and colonial people—as in North Africa, where almost two million European inhabitants live side by side with about twenty million "natives." All the present crises of French policy

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IN RECENT months the nationalist upheaval in French North Africa has moved from deep inside the New York *Times* to Page One—a shift reflecting not only the proportions of the North African crisis in itself, but also a growing realization of how deeply that crisis must concern thoughtful Americans and the people of the free world in general. And, as so often with the world's political problems, this one has a special importance for Jews, hundreds of thousands of whom are in danger of being caught between the conflicting forces. HERBERT LUETHY, recently returned from an extended visit to Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia, offers here a full and detailed analysis of a menacing situation whose complexities have been too often reduced in American thinking to the simple opposition of "imperialism" and "freedom." We have been previously indebted to Mr. Luethy for such penetrating political reports as "Selling Paris on Western Culture" (July 1952), "Behind Reawakened German Nationalism" (February 1952), and "Why Five Million Frenchmen Vote Communist" (September 1951). He was born in Switzerland, took his doctorate at the University of Zurich in history and the Romance languages, and has written several books on economic history. The present article has been translated from the German by Maurice J. Goldbloom.

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in North Africa arise, *not* from the relations between the mother country, France, and her North African dependencies, but from those between the European and Arab populations on the spot.

The problem, though different for each of the three North African lands of Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia, is basically that of how a tight colonial minority, far superior in standard of living, economic power, and political consciousness, can live together with a native population ten times as large and increasing far more rapidly. From all the angry articles and reports on French colonialism in North Africa one might think there was no problem easier to solve. Yet it has never been solved anywhere else—except where, as in North America and Australia, the natives were completely dispossessed and half exterminated, or, as in Latin America, had their religion and culture destroyed.

No analogy could be more distorted than that between North and South America's struggle for independence from British and Spanish rule, and the present fight for Arab "liberation" in North Africa. Not the red Indians, but the European colonists in America freed themselves from colonial rule. The parallel case in North Africa would be for the French colonists to secede from the French empire. (That this would be a catastrophe for all concerned does not keep some Frenchmen in Algiers and Tunis from playing with the idea—if only to remind the "liquidationist politicians" in Paris who "want to throw the French in North Africa to the Arab wolves" that the European settlers have something to say in the matter.)

The French Imperial Mission

METROPOLITAN France's intervention has served as the balancing factor in North Africa, and it is that today. There are times when—because of internal political weakness in France or reactionary connivance—her power to act seems to break down, leaving the reins in the hands of the colonists on the spot. And then the "Holy War," which, in North Africa as in all Arab lands, always lurks just under the surface, begins to threaten. But in the long run the colonial tradition of the French motherland has always reasserted itself. This tradition, the oldest and greatest since ancient Rome, is summed up in a word that has come into disrepute lately: assimilation.

The millennial history of French colonialism begins, really, with the assimilation of the piratical Normans. These Scandinavians, after a hundred years on French soil, again swarmed forth, but this time as Frenchmen, and they carried French language and culture to England, Sicily, and Syria. The process of assimilation that had fused into one nation all the peoples thrown together on French soil by the great migration extended almost without break into the creation of a "Greater France" in modern times. The program, or ideology, of French colonialism was always "to make Frenchmen," and its constant feature has been "cultural imperialism": the colonialism of a nation that never felt herself a "racial" or "tribal" unit, but rather a cultural one capable of absorbing all other human culture.

The French Republic secularized the sense of mission of the Bourbon monarchy by substituting the school certificate and the civil code for religious faith as symbols of conversion to French "culture and civilization." The emancipation of the colonial peoples, it was assumed, would be completed when all of them—Madagascans, Algerians, Senegalese, and Khmers—had become Frenchmen. A grandiose idea, and measured by its realization, an abysmally hypocritical one: a hundred years after the conquest of Algiers only one out of a hundred native children goes to school and only one out of a thousand Algerian Arabs is a French citizen. Yet it is the idea that has created this empire and held it together. The myth of the universality of French civilization is, or was, actually one of the few empire-building myths of our time. Its crisis is now France's deepest crisis, and it is hard to say whether the myth is still capable of renewing itself, or whether it will die forever in that cultural chauvinism so typical nowadays of many expressions of the French spirit.

Algeria: Base of the Third Empire

IN NORTH AFRICA, or at least in Algeria, conditions appeared to be very favorable to French colonialism. Algeria is truly "the natural continuation of France on the other side of the Mediterranean," and it is also a genuinely "French creation." A nest of pirates and slave traders on an impregnable reef—themselves ruled by Janissaries under nominal Turkish suzerainty—tyrannized over a barren, thinly populated hinterland and paralyzed sea traffic

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in the western Mediterranean. The conquest of this territory in 1830, which laid the basis for a new, and third, French colonial empire, began as but one more punitive expedition. After an unexpected success, it planlessly and almost automatically merged into the conquest of the hinterland and the founding of "Algeria" —the name itself being first given to this desolate, nameless, historyless land by the French.

An inhospitable highland, cut off from the sea for almost its entire length by steep beaches, Algeria had nevertheless been constantly subject to invasions and nomadic raids from the east, south, and west. It had never found an independent inner unity, a beginning of historical continuity. None of the efforts to establish urban culture on its harsh soil had lasted as much as three generations before being leveled to the ground by a nomadic incursion. The country had no organized force with which to fight colonization, only the anarchical resistance that its mountain and desert tribes put up against every and any kind of rule. This resistance was disposed of by the French in a series of campaigns that took thirty years.

The French began to colonize Algeria by Roman methods, the only efficacious ones here, and to build from the ground up. Annexation was followed by administrative incorporation into the mother country, and by the state-organized founding of military colonies, of cities and villages settled by Frenchmen, that, even in externals, seemed transplanted straight from France. "Ownerless land"—i.e., land not in private possession according to French civil law—and the land of insurgent tribes was confiscated, made arable, and parceled out. Now, half the cultivated soil of Algeria, largely won from salt desert, steppe, and pasture, belongs to French peasants.

When the policy of assimilation was introduced in Algeria in 1865, it could really start with a clean slate. There never had been a nation, people, or past to which Algerian "national" consciousness could cling, and there seemed no conceivable future for the country aside from full absorption into France. And, actually, the amalgamation of Europe and the Orient was never carried so far as it was here. But it produced no real synthesis. Here was France, but the mass of the native population remained outside her schools, her justice, her democratic institutions—in the tragic position of a people that, in their own country, had until five years ago more or less the status of homeless aliens, neither "subjects," a concept not recognized by French law, nor "citizens" in the true sense. Their language was officially regarded as a foreign one, and their religion as a sect. They were an "internal proletariat," as much foreigners on the outskirts of the French city of Algiers as in France itself.

Assimilation Founders on Islam

THROUGH the labyrinth of steep alleys and flights of steps of the Arab old city of Algiers—the notorious Casbah—run two broad European streets in the Parisian style of 1865. Here Napoleon III, dreaming of an "Arab empire," settled state-subsidized French immigrants, hoping that by mixing residential areas he would promote the mixing of races, customs, and ways of life, and hasten a French-Arab symbiosis. Ten years later the last European was gone and the Casbah had swallowed up the broad avenues. The two populations had separated again like oil and water.

One may adduce many reasons for the collapse of the French policy of assimilation in North Africa. The decisive one might appear to be the gulf between the standards of living of the Arab and European populations. But this division does not follow ethnic lines altogether: Algeria has a European proletariat and a prosperous Arab bourgeoisie. And to speak of a "color bar" in North Africa is absurd. The Arabized Berbers of North Africa are not "colored" but "white," and there was never any policy of segregation. There is really only one bar that is insurmountable: Islam. This is not primarily a question of religion as such. The colonization policy of the French Republic is strictly secular, and has avoided any hint of a religious mission. Islam, to be sure, is a religious system. But it is also a granite block as impermeable to Europeanization as it is to Christianization.

Islam is a totalitarianism grown old and petrified. It means "subjection"—not only to a religious faith, but to a whole religious, political, juridical, and social system comprehending all spheres of life. The radical simplicity of its faith, a strict monotheism abstracted from Judaism and Christianity but stripped of all their mysteries, can be summed up in the formula "God is God." This, together with a few formulas and rites, gives Islam, even today, an incomparable penetrative power among peoples at the same cultural stage as that of

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Arabia at the time of the Prophet; thus the conquest of all Africa by Islam is still a thoroughly plausible perspective.

Islam means a social system that recognizes no community other than her own religious one, no law other than the Koran and the Sunnah, no truth outside the revealed truth of the Prophet, and no science except the interpretation of this truth. Every religion is in a certain sense a "total system," but what distinguishes Islam is its stubborn negation of every distinction between the spiritual and secular spheres, spiritual and secular authority, spiritual and secular law. The kingdom of the Prophet was completely "of this world"; he was the political founder of a religion and the religious missionary who built an empire—prophet, chief of state, and conqueror in one. Arab colonization has been total and lasting as no other before or since, not because it was particularly cruel or intolerant—on the contrary, it had from the beginning a contemptuous tolerance for those who remained apart—but because of its monolithic pressure.

However, the strength and greatness of Islam also proved to be its weakness. The society it created and the law it gave were immutable, and this immutability embraced all spheres of life, spiritual and material, public and private. The high point of Arab culture and science in medieval Cordova and Bagdad is like a burst of fireworks: a shower of sparks was produced by the fusing of the old cultural centers of the Mediterranean into a single Islamic bloc, only to die down quickly once this original fuel had been spent. Since the 14th century, Arab civilization has created literally nothing in art, literature, science, or politics, nor, except for war lords, despots, and imams, has it produced any historical personalities, whether individual or national, since then. As the Arabesque style froze, so the Arabic literary language, bound to the Koran, froze into a learned and ecclesiastical language cut off from living roots. Jurisprudence and philology, the only subjects other than theology taught in Arab universities, likewise became petrified because confined to the exegesis of the Koranic tradition.

The Arab empire and its successors were never able to produce a state constitution, but continued to try to rule with the tribal institutions and organizational forms that Mohammed and his followers had brought out of Arabia. None of the Arab dynasties into which the empire fell apart ever created even a binding law of succession. State power remained the property of the family of the Prophet, handed down according to the same collective right of inheritance that applied to pasture land; in practice this was the right of the stronger—it amounted to "despotism tempered by assassination."

The Islamic community, whether appearing as state, church, tribe, brotherhood, fanatical army, or political party, has remained the same for thirteen centuries: a chief and his following of faithful—a chief reluctant to divide or delegate his powers. Here such Western concepts as "state," "nation," "democracy," "monarchy," "feudalism" are futile. The amazing durability of the Islamic form of religio-political organization, apparently doomed at every moment to anarchy and collapse, is owed to its ability always and everywhere spontaneously to reconstitute itself, whether in the remotest valley of the Atlas Mountains or in a barracks in Paris. A chief and a following of the faithful suffice. Another factor is the seclusion of the women, who remain veiled, ignorant, submissive, outside public life. The woman, and thus the family, remain insulated from changes in the outside world, and every new generation is born out of the womb of ignorance into subjection to tradition.

Arab "Nationalism"

The Arab world, by virtue of its numbers and strategic position at the juncture of three continents, has become a significant factor in international politics; but this does not change its inner structure, only its bargaining position. This world has, for a century now, been increasingly threatened by Western technology, Western schools, and Western political intervention; but these all meet resistance. Xenophobia, religious fanaticism, and reactionary traditionalism, all of them basically variants of the "Holy War," have symptomized the efforts to get rid of the "Western poison." For thirty years Turkey's "Kemalist" revolution, a radical effort at westernization, has remained an isolated phenomenon, anathematized by the spokesmen of pan-Arabism; and indeed, though Turkey is a Moslem country, it is not an Arab one. (However, the sudden recent spread of "Kemalism" in new forms over the Middle East may open a more promising chapter in Arab history; it is perhaps the most hopeful current development in this part of the world.)

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But so far the Arab's only answer to the modern world has been "nationalism." That is another word that has been thoughtlessly transposed from the world of Western ideas into an alien one. Outside Arabia there is no Arab people, but only an Arab civilization, and nothing is more foreign to it than the idea of a nation. Islam is supranational, and Arab colonization largely obliterated the individuality of the nations it overran. What one calls "Arab nationalism" does not express national feeling, or allegiance to a nation, but allegiance to Arab civilization and to Islam. It does not mean national emancipation, but simply resistance to the West. This resistance, though acted out differently in different places, is fundamentally one and the same everywhere.

Of course, there are differences that depend on the length and intensity of European influence. In French North Africa today, there are various sorts of opposition to French rule, from the ever mobilizable atavism of the "Holy War" to modern nationalism, mostly of Young Turk inspiration. The one looks backward, the other forward; the one toward Cairo, the other toward the West. Movements such as the Party of the Algerian Manifesto and the Tunisian Néo-Destour are led by an elite schooled in French political thought. And it is one of the paradoxes of the French empire that almost all its colonial emancipation movements begin in Paris. The Algerian People's party of Messali Hadj was founded in Paris after the First World War as the Etoile Nord-Africaine, and even today it has its strongest base among the Algerian workers in France. The Moroccan Istiqlal was founded by a manifesto of Moroccan students in Paris. The Party of the Algerian Manifesto and the Néo-Destour of Tunis are based on the Europeanized intellectual class in each country, who, in their own words, "took their French schoolbooks seriously." The same is true of the rest of the French empire. It was not from Moscow but from France that Communism was imported into Indo-China, and Ho Chi Minh served his apprenticeship as a political agitator in Paris.

Paris, capital of the French empire, is thus the incubator, too, of all the movements and conspiracies against its rule. Astounding as it seems at first glance, even the most radical independence movements in the French colonial possessions again and again stress their love for France—but for another France than that represented overseas by her governors-general and residents, the France of the "ideas of 1789." This is not merely rhetoric. The conflict between French colonists and natives startlingly reproduces the style, terminology, and mental attitudes of the conflict between "the two Frances" in the mother country itself. The colonists act as the conservative right and the natives as the radical left, and a superficial observer always runs the danger of forgetting that he is not in Europe. Aside from Abd-el Krim, the hero of the Riff War, whose experience and thinking have remained on the level of the "Holy War," none of the North African leaders has allied himself with the pan-Arab and pan-Islamic chiefs in Cairo. In that company of whirling dervishes and cynical pashas Habib Abou Rekaba and even Messali Hadj, the Algerian prophet, feel too European. So when one speaks of the collapse of the French policy of assimilation in North Africa one does not mean that it has had no results, but only that they have been different from those anticipated.

North Africa's Jews

For the Jews of North Africa, French rule has worked brilliantly. Before, they had lived in the worst poverty, demoralization, and disrepute—now they have accomplished a development of six centuries in the course of a few generations. More than half the Jews in Mohammedan countries live in French North Africa, and almost half of these in Morocco. The figures for 1947-8 were 130,000 Jews in Algeria, 85,000 in Tunisia, and 205,000 in French Morocco. (The total number of Jews in all Mohammedan countries was at that time 846,000, but it has materially declined since then owing to emigration to Israel.)

Visiting a Moroccan ghetto, a *mellah,* one can still get an idea of how North African Jewry lived before the French came—in Morocco it was only forty years ago. Even the Arab old city, the *medina,* a monument of the "old urban culture" of Morocco that was carefully preserved by Marshal Lyautey, is bad enough from a modern point of view—narrow, overpopulated, and stifling, without light, air, or water. But it has, at least, a picturesqueness in its arched gateways, its mosques, and in the colorful tumult of its market; moreover, behind the whitewashed façades of the narrow and filthy alleys often lie the splendid palaces of

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rich pashas and merchants, with wide inner courts and bubbling fountains. In comparison, the *mellah* is a hell without any redeeming elements, a hybrid of catacomb, sewer, prison, and slum. There are ghettos in Morocco where each person has but two square yards of *Lebensraum* even when streets, courts, and dwelling space are all added together—hardly room for a grave. The population that vegetated there was apathetic, bent, undernourished, pauperized, clothed in black rags, eaten up by disease and sores, living literally on the refuse of Morocco.

The educational work of the Alliance Israélite Universelle, founded in Paris in 1860, began in Morocco under French protection ninety years ago. But it was only under the full French protectorate that it could develop unhindered, and since the end of the Second World War it has acquired the force of an earthquake. In the Alliance schools scattered through Morocco, and especially in the Jewish "university city" of Casablanca, a medieval sub-proletariat is being lifted under our eyes into modern humanity. The Alliance has placed great stress on training not only intellectuals and businessmen, but also skilled artisans, industrial workers, and farmers. Among the Mohammedans in the years before the Second World War, it was necessary for teachers and police to go out and look for students, and many classes remained empty. But the inhabitants of the ghetto fought from the first for every available place in a school, prepared to make any sacrifice in order to open the "road to life" for their children.

In these modern schools, distinguished from Western schools only by the enthusiasm and eagerness of their students, it is difficult to imagine that the pupils and even most of their teachers come directly from the misery of the ghetto. Today practically every native Jewish child in Morocco goes to a French school or one run by the Alliance.

But the solution of one problem leads to another. The new Jewish generation coming out of these schools will no longer accept existence in the *mellah*. Yet public life is barred to them; the present tendencies of Moroccan nationalism rule out any idea that Morocco might become a religiously neutral state. Thus Moroccan Jewry lives in a sort of "protectorate within the Protectorate." When the French under Mangin entered Marrakesh in 1912, they were received to their astonishment with the singing of the "Marseillaise"; it was the Jewish school children who sang it. Neither the Jews nor the Moslems of Morocco can forget that the former owe their emancipation to French suzerainty. It is not a question of "prejudice"; the tradition of Islam, as we know, is one of religious, if discriminatory, tolerance. But this sort of tolerance is no longer acceptable to the Europeanized Jewish minority of Morocco.

To date, the industrial and commercial mushrooming of the North Moroccan cities has provided a sufficient outlet for the newly released Jewish energies. The Jewish population of Casablanca alone has, since 1912, been swelled from 5,000 to 65,000 by immigration from the *mellahs* of the interior. With peaceful political and economic development, the building up of Morocco would continue to offer opportunity enough for her Jews. Emigration to Israel, which was large for some years, has once again almost reached a standstill. It would rise again, however, and become a mass exodus if France's position in Morocco should be seriously endangered in the near future.

Algerian and Tunisian Jewry

In Algeria and Tunisia the process that in Morocco is now at its height has, in many essentials, long been completed. In 1870 political and legal inclusion in the body of Greater France made possible a simple and radical solution of the Jewish problem in Algeria. In that year the Crémieux Decree gave full French citizenship to the native Jews of Algeria. The corollary of allegiance to the French civil code, which involved a sort of apostasy for Mohammedans, was no obstacle to Jews. Thus eighty years ago every political, legal, and social limitation was removed from Algerian Jewish life; many Algerian Jews since then have had illustrious careers.

This has not left them without problems. The Crémieux Decree was issued at the demand of the French settlers, in order to strengthen their position by bringing over to the European side the most assimilable part of the native population. It was a special case of "divide and rule." French colonization begins everywhere by forming native elites that act as outposts of French civilization and French loyalty. But when this elite is drawn from a native minority group, the conflicts are not bridged, but merely shifted. The resentment of the Algerian Arabs at this privileged Jewish

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assimilation played a role in the Kabyle uprisings of 1871, and has never altogether disappeared.

On the other hand, wholesale juridical assimilation is not exactly the same thing as social amalgamation; it furnishes only one of the conditions that enable an individual to integrate himself into a group other than his original one. As a group themselves, the Jews of Algeria still stand midway between the Arabs and the Europeans, and their way of life ranges all the way from that of the French *haute bourgeoisie* to that of native squalor. The French-Jewish alliance formed in 1871 has, moreover, often been an uneasy one. At the turn of the century the wave of anti-Semitism that broke in France with the Dreyfus case attained its greatest heights among the French in Algeria. The Vichy government's repeal in 1940 of the Crémieux Decree struck a serious blow at France's policy of assimilation, even in the eyes of the Algerian Arabs: "If the grant of French citizenship is a provisional and revocable favor, then it is not only more honorable, but safer, to fight for an Algerian citizenship of our own," was the conclusion such Algerian leaders as Ferhat Abbas drew.

TUNISIA, like Morocco, has the legal status of a protectorate, and its Jewish inhabitants have for the most part remained Tunisians and subjects of the Bey. But the Tunisian state is far less theocratic than the Moroccan, and its Western influences far older and deeper. Tunisia has been developing for almost a hundred years in the direction of a religiously neutral state on the Western model. The Tunisian independence movement itself is the most "Western" and the freest from religious fanaticism of any Arab country. A relatively large number of Tunisian Jews—about 8,000, as compared to approximately half as many Mohammedan Tunisians—have become French citizens individually, and have gone over to the already very heterogeneous European minority in Tunisia.

Thus, in spite of all legal differences, the fate of the Jews in the three North African countries is indissolubly bound up with that of the European minorities. One might say that it poses in the second degree—as a minority within a minority—the basic problem of the Afro-European situation, that of the living together of different peoples and civilizations. The fact that at least three different ethnic groups are "condemned to live together" has the advantage of preventing one minority from being left alone to face one majority in ancestral hostility. But this also means, for the Jews, balancing on two chairs that might be pulled apart some day with dire results.

The reactions of the North African Jews to this situation run a gamut from super-French chauvinism and bitterness against the Arabs at one end, to an eager search for a conciliatory solution at the other. A few Jews incline to a defeatist attitude and see emigration as the only way out. In Morocco, given the political and juridical status of the Jewish community there, Jewish political thinking keeps within the limits of ethnic and religious minority concerns on the whole, asking only for protection and avoiding "interference" in Moroccan-French relations except where Jewish interests are involved. (This only reflects the archaic character of Morocco.) As for Algeria and Tunisia, it would be difficult to isolate a specifically Jewish position on the problems of North Africa in either country. The loyalty Jews generally feel toward France is something they share with their European fellow citizens, and they have retained this loyalty despite the cruel shocks received under the Vichy regime.

Indeed, Jewish political opinion still follows along in the tradition of the solid "bloc" that came into existence in the days of the Dreyfus case, around 1900. Then violent anti-Semitism was widespread in North Africa, and the Jewish vote went en masse, and for good reasons, to the pro-Dreyfus, anti-clerical left-wing parties —the Radical-Socialists, above all, with the Socialists running a poor second. The heritage is still alive in the Jewish community—René Mayer, Jewish deputy from Constantine (Algeria) and former French prime minister, represents the Radical-Socialist party brilliantly in Paris—but it has lost its militant flavor. The problems are different now, and mass Arab emancipation, once an almost exclusively theoretical question, holds the political foreground. Radical-Socialism has itself become quite conservative, and stands uncompromisingly behind French colonial rule, while the Socialists themselves have become a party of moderate reform. It is of a piece with this that Jewish opinion in Algeria and Tunisia is generally even more reluctant to grant Arab emancipation claims than are the European settlers. But the struggle over this issue has been so far entirely a Franco-

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Arab one, with the Jews standing outside and being wooed, right now, by both sides.

The creation of a genuine multi-national society in North Africa—which, though remote, might be the only real solution of the problem—or even of a state of tolerable "coexistence," is made neither more difficult nor easier by the presence of an autochthonous Jewish minority. The only difference is that the Jews are more aware than the others that there are no ready-made logical "solutions," and that the situation does not demand moral verdicts so much as down-to-earth politics and slow adaptations and compromises with realities. These would hardly be brought nearer if France were compelled to relinquish her role as arbitrator.

Algeria Seeks Autonomy

One outstanding fact is, however, clear today: the Arabs of North Africa will not become Frenchmen (or Europeans). The naive self-assurance which once stood back of the French idea of assimilation has vanished, and a period of seeking and groping for a new orientation has begun. The old French dream has been wrecked on the reefs of an awakening of Arab "national" consciousness, the resistance of the French colonists, and France's loss of power and prestige in the Second World War. The political and intellectual transformation from an assimilationist to an autonomist of the most important representative of the Algerian elite, the founder and leader of the Party of the Algerian Manifesto, Ferhat Abbas, strikingly illustrates this.

"Beyond Nationalism! I am France!" was the title of a famous article that he, the young son of an Algerian dignitary and already a commander of the Legion of Honor, published in February 1936. "If I had discovered the 'Algerian nation' I would be a nationalist and would not camouflage it. . . . But I will not die for the 'Algerian fatherland,' for this fatherland does not exist. . . . I have not found it. . . . We have discarded once and for all these mists and chimeras, in order to link our future definitely with that of France's work in this country. Six million Mohammedans live on this soil, which has been French for a hundred years. They dwell in holes, go barefoot, without clothes and often without bread. We want to create a modern society out of this hungry multitude . . . to elevate them to human dignity . . . that they may be worthy to be called Frenchmen. . . ."

That was only sixteen years ago. Today it seems scarcely credible that the realization of this utopia then seemed so near. In 1937 Léon Blum's Popular Front government laid before the French parliament an assimilation decree in favor of the Arab elite in Algeria. In retrospect, this appears to have been the last great chance for the assimilation policy. It envisaged the granting of citizenship rights to some 30,000 Algerian veterans of the First World War, and to all officials, teachers, and possessors of an advanced education. But—and this was the step of greatest symbolic importance—this would not require a change of civil status, i.e., the transfer of the new citizens from Koranic to French civil law. Thus would be removed that religious obstacle to "becoming French" which only a few Algerian Mohammedans had theretofore surmounted. The project, greeted with enthusiasm by many Algerian intellectuals, was bitterly resisted by the French colony in Algeria as an "invasion of half-assimilated natives." The mass resignation of the Algerian mayors in protest induced the right wing of the Popular Front, the Radical-Socialist party, and finally the government and parliament to shelve the Blum-Viollette proposal.

When the 1939 war came, Ferhat Abbas volunteered for the French medical corps and, in a "Letter to My Electors," once again declared his allegiance to France. In 1942, more than two years after the French defeat, with an Allied expeditionary force on Algerian soil, he presented an "Algerian Manifesto" to the French and the Allied authorities, including the Soviet Union, in the name of the native notables of Algeria. The declaration of principles and the program of reform it contained became the charter of Algerian autonomism.

In answer to this "Manifesto," an Assimilation Decree was issued by the French Committee of Liberation, on March 7, 1944, that realized the Viollette project on a much broader basis. About 80,000 Algerian Moslems were given full French citizenship without changing their personal status. On May 7, 1946, the first Constituent Assembly of liberated France voted that: "From June 1, 1946, all nationals of overseas territories, including Algeria, have the status of French citizens with the same rights as French nationals in the mother country and in the overseas territories." But this final triumph of France's policy of assimilation was celebrated on paper alone. The measure awoke no echo in Algeria, the Arab elite of Algeria

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having by now discovered the "Algerian nation" for which they had sought in vain ten years earlier. They demanded that this new nation be recognized forthwith and granted its own parliament and government as an "Algerian republic within the French Union."

A YEAR later, in 1947, the "Organic Statute of Algeria" went part of the way toward meeting this demand. The Algerian Financial Assembly, which since 1900 had exercised a limited autonomy in Algerian financial questions on behalf of the European colonists, was expanded into an elective Algerian parliament. But its decisions remained subject to ratification by the French National Assembly and by a governor-general appointed from Paris. A typical compromise that satisfied nobody, the new constitution established a double electoral college for the elections both to the Algerian communal councils and to the French parliament. Under this arrangement 1,000,000 French citizens in Algeria send the same number of members to the Algerian and French parliaments as 8,000,000 Mohammedan citizens. A native Algerian of Koranic status is, if he lives in France, a full voter like any other Frenchman; in his own country he is a second-class one.

Yet this set-up contains a factor which might eventually correct the inequality. The second electoral college is purely native, and the first is open to gradual Algerianization. Besides ethnic Frenchmen, the first electoral college includes all assimilated immigrants from other Mediterranean countries, all Algerian Jews legally assimilated since 1870, and in principle all Algerians who have French citizenship by virtue of the various assimilation decrees prior to 1946, as well as all Algerians who can qualify as members of the "elite" by having finished any school, served in the army, or held any public post, including trade union office. Though the number of Arabs who actually vote has been considerably reduced by a boycott by Arab nationalists as well as by the intentional negligence of many French officials in preparing the voters' lists, the way is actually opened under the present arrangement for a gradual conquest of the first college by the broadest native Algerian elite.

The French colonists cried bloody murder at this intrusion of natives into the European representation because it would lead in the end to the native Algerians having more than one electoral college and the Europeans less than one. Yet, despite the protests on both sides, it would be hard to find a more practicable way of squaring the Algerian circle. How else can the Algerian natives be given self-government and equal rights, and at the same time the European minority be protected from the extreme Arab nationalists? Ultimate solutions are unthinkable. At any rate, every Algerian is a French citizen today. He can travel freely to France, take a job there, and settle there. The Algerian administration no longer imports its officials from France but recruits them at home, and inequality of pay in public service and the army is disappearing. A native Algerian post-office or railroad official can transfer to Paris, just as a Frenchman can to Algiers.

Neither autonomy nor independence, however, can solve the fundamental problem of the coexistence of European and Arab. Algeria is no India or Abadan, and only a madman's fantasy envisages "throwing the Europeans into the sea." That the extremist Algerian People's party of the itinerant prophet Messali Hadj talks this way, nevertheless, and that its appeal to religious fanaticism and the "Holy War" temporarily finds more fertile soil than do the far more complicated ideas of the moderate parties, is but part of the pathology of "colonial democracy." So is the reaction of blind hatred and fear on the part of the European colony.

IN THE Algerian communal elections that took place some weeks after the promulgation of the new constitution, the "European" college voted down the line for the Gaullist "Rally," under whose banner all the colonialist and anti-native reactionaries had gathered, from the big landholders and mine owners to officials trembling for their jobs. In the "native" electoral college the extremist and terrorist Algerian People's party of Messali Hadj swamped the moderate Party of the Algerian Manifesto, which only a year earlier had won 70 per cent of all Arab votes. An Algerian parliament made up on the basis of these latest elections would have become the arena of wild and sterile fanaticisms, so the French Interior Ministry and the new governor-general found a way out that, while not very graceful, was scarcely avoidable. The Algerian parliamentary elections of 1948—and in somewhat lesser degree the partial new elections of 1951—were openly and shamelessly rigged by the administration. Except in the

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cities and larger towns, where the pressure of public opinion kept the elections honest to some degree, hardly any but official candidates—"yes-men"—were sent to the Algerian assembly as representatives of the "native" college.

The result is a parliament where the interests of the colonists are ardently championed by the representatives of the first college, while those of the Arabs are represented, except for a handful of nationalist deputies, by obedient tools of the government-general. The French authorities, when they speak frankly, justify their course more or less as follows: "Universal suffrage, which often does harm even in old democracies, is in Algeria an infernal machine that would blow everything up if it were not manipulated. This people is immature, ignorant, and infinitely gullible; it must be led by the hand like a child. The elections are not an act of self-determination, but rather of political education; as the voter goes to the ballot box he gradually learns to understand problems that his offspring alone will be able to decide as free citizens. He acquires the basic motions of democracy, but he must be told what ballot to drop in the box, and if he still votes wrong, we must be able to correct him." Since this argument is hard to present to world opinion, the political atmosphere of Algeria is soaked in hypocrisy. But is the argument completely wrong? It is the plea of that "enlightened despotism" which has everywhere been a necessary prelude to democracy; the question is whether the accent is on "enlightened" or "despotism."

THE most encouraging aspect of the Algerian situation is that the search for a solution is also taking place on the Arab side. The manifestoes and reforms proposed by the leaders of the Party of the Algerian Manifesto express genuine political thinking. They do not indulge in sterile hatred or historical denunciations of colonialism, but accept the history of the last hundred years as irrevocable, and start from the present situation. Their model is not the restored Middle Ages of the Arab League, but Kemal's Turkey. No hall of the Union of the Algerian Manifesto is without his picture. All this betrays the very new recognition that the Arabs of Algiers cannot be emancipated from European domination alone or from European influence altogether, but must also be emancipated from their own past—which is not the same thing as the repudiation of that past.

In Sétif, its political stronghold, I visited one of the youth camps of the Party of the Manifesto. The discussions held there by young Algerians on the organization and internal franchise, the program and ideology of the "Youth of the Manifesto," were beyond doubt a better school of democracy than the Algerian pseudo-parliament. They would have done credit to any Western youth organization. But the sensational and really revolutionary thing about this particular meeting was that for the first time an Algerian Mohammedan girl took part in a public conference of this sort. She was a delegate from a section, had full voting rights, and did not wear a veil. (Women do not vote in the Algerian "native" electoral college, as they do in the first, and no native deputy or politician has ever actually proposed giving Arab women the suffrage which the Algerian constitution envisaged for women in *both* colleges.) Significantly, this girl (who was obviously frightened by her own role) did not come from Algeria: as it happened, she was the delegate of an Algerian youth section in Lyons, and had been brought up and educated in France.

Precisely such a piece of boldness as the presence of a woman at a political congress shows how long the Algerian road to modern ways of life still is. The counterpart to the girl from Lyons is the large number of Algerian workers in France, who for the most part no longer adhere to the archaic forms of Islamic family life when they return, if they do at all, to Algeria. (The prophet of extreme Algerian nationalism, Messali Hadj, is himself married to a Frenchwoman.) The conditions under which this "mixture of civilizations" takes place in the Arab quarters of Paris, Lyons, and St. Etienne are indeed not always of the best, which may be why the Algerian proletariat in France provided the first mass basis for Algerian nationalism.

But we are only at the beginning of the drama that began a few decades ago to rock the small educated elite of Algeria, and today affects ever wider circles of the Mohammedan population. After a century of colonization, the clash of Western civilization and Islam has just begun—a clash in which if it is to be fruitful, there must be neither victor nor vanquished. To forget this in dealing with the immediate problems of North Africa, and to attempt to impose quick and complete solutions, can only do harm.

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Morocco Demands a Restoration

IN APPEARANCE, the problems of the two North African protectorates that flank the central bastion of Algeria on the east and west are much simpler. Morocco and Tunisia retain their individuality, their inherited state forms, and the consciousness of their own history. But today these two ancient monarchies, after having been propped up for several decades by a French protectorate, now demand the return of their independence. Compared with Algerian nationalism, striving laboriously for its own definition, the nationalist movements of Morocco and Tunis have a great advantage. But they also have a great disadvantage. Since they do not have to start from nothing, they try to go backward to what they had—toward a restoration of the pre-colonial era. However, there is a difference of a generation between colonization in Tunis and in Morocco—and a difference of centuries between Néo-Destour in Tunis and Istiqlal in Morocco.

Morocco is a medieval theocracy that survived into the 20th century as the last Arab state, in wild isolation from the outside world. A few decades ago it was abruptly thrown in contact with the modern world. The French protectorate was established in 1912, but not until 1934 were the last Berber tribes, which had never recognized any state authority, even that of the Sultan, conquered. A rugged and inhospitable country, it had barely managed to support a third of its present population at the beginning of the century.

Luckily, the Moroccan protectorate in its first fifteen years was guided by one of the greatest colonizers of modern times, Marshal Lyautey. He understood, loved, and admired the country and its people, and set out to make it into a modern nation without sacrificing its individuality and traditions. With the genius of a great promoter, he "sold" Morocco as a field for capital investment and at the same time protected with conservative zeal its state and religious institutions, its cities and antiquities, and its natural riches. His nationalization, on behalf of the Moroccan state, of the phosphate mines, whose opening up and exploitation gave the country its first great industry, placed its administration on a sound financial basis. The "spirit of Lyautey," which even the Moroccan nationalists still cite as a model in attacking contemporary French policy in the Protectorate, was a strange mixture of extreme modernity and the colonizing spirit of the *ancien régime*, which had seen colonization not as a business, or merely a matter of prestige, but as a mission.

Few of Lyautey's successors in the Residency at Rabat have worked in a similar spirit, even if they have all zealously paid it lip service. Some, like General Juin in the recent past, showed the sense of tact of a police sergeant. In the decade after Lyautey, Algerian administrators and Algerian methods of direct administration were imported into Morocco, a slap in the face to the principle of the Protectorate. The Moroccans are quite aware of the difference between the "French of France" and the French colonists' sons from Algeria who find it so easy to act as a master race. Nevertheless, enough of the "spirit of Lyautey" has remained alive in the Protectorate's officials, the army, and the outposts of colonization to set the tone.

In this new country the word "colonization" still has its ancient ring. A French officer and a couple of men, alone in a large district in the Atlas Mountains, represent the *"pax franca,"* the new peace and prosperity that have replaced the still vividly remembered days of anarchy, tribal wars, and the law of tooth and claw. The teacher of a newly opened school in the Bled has to ride a motorcycle to round up his students and persuade their parents to let them go to school. The staffs of the agricultural modernization stations show single families or whole tribes the advantages of new crops and modern methods of cultivation. They distribute seed and draft animals, bore wells, and lay out irrigation canals. Their outposts often become centers of social life, training schools, kindergartens, smithies, pharmacies, hospitals, and purveyors of assistance and advice in every type of situation. Physicians and medical assistants are scattered over the country, and dispensaries are strategically placed around the disease incubators that are the old Moroccan cities. Veiled Moroccan women visit them with their children, not only for medical help but to learn the simplest things about hygiene and child care. They are also taught cooking, sewing, and housekeeping. These aspects of colonization cannot be wiped out by the ugly drama of the shanty towns—the *"bidonvilles"* (*bidon* means tin gasoline drum) that cluster around the larger urban centers in Morocco.

THE European-educated intelligentsia that leads the Moroccan nationalist party, the

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Istiqlal, is a small minority drawn almost without exception from rich and powerful old families. They have gone from the school bench to political action without any transition. In 1934, when the suppression of the last dissident tribes extended the authority of the Moroccan monarchy over the entire territory of the country for the first time, a group of Moroccan students in Paris collaborated with some leftist French journalists in drawing up a "reform plan" for Morocco that demanded a modern democratic and parliamentary constitution immediately. This was the beginning of the Istiqlal. At that time there were only about twenty Moroccans who had finished secondary schools. They were so few that they could have all become cabinet ministers, and all of them wanted to.

Today the Moroccan intelligentsia as yet includes no scientists, engineers, technicians, or agronomists. There are a few physicians, but very many lawyers, this being the kind of education best suited to a political career. What still blocks an increase of schools for the natives, and a gradual replacement of the European administrative apparatus, is the difficulty of finding Moroccans with enough education to be teachers and officials, even when the requirements are brought down well below those demanded of Frenchmen. Modestly paid public jobs do not attract the Moroccan intellectual elite, who find, thanks to their small number, more than enough brilliant political or business careers open to them.

This complete lack of the home-grown cadres on which a modern, especially a democratic, state must be based doesn't seem to bother the Istiqlal leaders. It is a party of "revolution from above"—and such a revolution today would mean little more than a restoration of Morocco's pre-protectorate position. The party's propaganda shifted some years ago from the democratic theses of the "reform plan" of 1934 to an idolatrous cult of the Sultan, who as Sherif —a direct descendant of the Prophet—incorporates in himself all secular and spiritual authority, and whose portrait in all colors and sizes has been distributed far and wide as the symbol of Moroccan nationalism. Sultan Sidi Mohammed was raised to the throne, while still an adolescent, in 1928 by the French Protectorate authorities over the claims of older rivals. He united all the accessories of an Oriental potentate—harem, palace slaves, Moorish guards, and the luxury of the Arabian Nights—with a decided modernism. His favorite daughter appears in public without a veil, which no other Mohammedan citizeness could do in this strictly orthodox state. His eldest son, in whose favor the Sultan is trying to establish the Western right of primogeniture instead of the traditional "election" of a favored member of the family by the "scholars of the Koran," is studying law. Last year the Sultan devoted a great part of his speech from the throne in the imperial mosque of Rabat to celebrating the fact that his son had passed an examination.

The Istiqlal functions as a sort of state within a state. The Moroccan trade union movement, its cells being identical with those of the Istiqlal, is nothing more than its prolonged arm. The party also has its own schools in which three or four thousand sons of the Moroccan aristocracy are brought up in a spirit of strict Arab chauvinism. The Protectorate authorities have tried half-heartedly to block Istiqlal's expansion into trade unionism and education, but their attempt to make French unions alone legal in Morocco, so that the Moroccan workers would be "trained" by French cadres, had as its sole result that the Moroccan nationalists swamped the Communist-dominated CGT and, by taking over Communist organizational techniques, turned the CGT into another purely auxiliary organization of the Istiqlal.*

*The only Communist party of any significance in North Africa is the Algerian one, but it still suffers from the effects of the French nationalist and "assimilationist" line it followed in the days of Communist participation in the French government in Paris. Once a supporter of Algerian nationalism and closely linked with the Etoile Nord-Africaine, this party is now mainly European in composition and following, with its representation restricted to the first, or European, electoral college. Since 1947, however, having returned to its support of Arab nationalism, it has tried to outbid the separatist slogans of Messali Hadj's Algerian People's party, but with little success, since Algerian extremist nationalism and the Algerian working class in particular —even in France—still stand firmly behind the latter. In Algeria the contrast between the followers of the Communist party and its present line is even more grotesque than in certain parts of France where prosperous farmers vote Communist en masse; in both cases a great deal of noise and the appearance of numerical strength go hand in hand with impotence in the field of action. The Communists, being fundamentally as weak in Algeria as in most other Arab countries, are able to do nothing more than pour oil on fires others have lighted. Some defenders of

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The power and prestige of the Istiqlal being based above all on its function as the Sultan's mouthpiece, its influence is confined to those parts of the population of Morocco—essentially Arab—for whom the Sultan is the traditional and hallowed ruler. This means that the party has no hold on the Berbers of the mountains and plains, who until lately were practically independent and constantly at war with the Arab rulers.

There is a temptation today to blame the French for the traditional Arab-Berber conflict, and, in fact, French policy has in recent years —with especially heavy-handed incompetence under General Juin—attempted to play it up against the Sultan's claims to sovereignty. But one should remember that internal dissension in India, too, used to be regarded as an "imperialist trick"—until, with the departure of the British, religious conflict exploded into civil war, massacre, and mass expulsions. Actually, Morocco has been much less Arabized than the rest of North Africa, and outside the cities and the northwestern plain hardly touched by Arab culture. The Berbers of the mountainous hinterland have remained in permanent revolt, and successfully defended their national, linguistic, and, in a certain sense, even their religious individuality. Half the people in Morocco have never accepted the Arabic language, and even where Islam rules, Morocco remains largely a land of magic, heathen sects, local saints, and mystical brotherhoods (*zawiya*). Marrakesh, the capital of the South, is a city full of pagan pleasures, in sharpest conceivable contrast to the old capital of the Sultanate at Fez.

French colonization until 1934 was based on the Arabs and the Sultan, on whose behalf the French established the unity of the country, but they have since tended to seek support from the once dissident Berbers and the powerful Pasha of Marrakesh. Many high officials of the Protectorate seem to accept the policy an old colonist in Marrakesh formulated for me: "We shall never hold this country except by feudalism." Nothing could be wronger. Having established the unity of Morocco for the first time, the French, if they wish to remain, must willy-nilly continue to fuse her various parts into a nation.

The establishment of peace and the authority of the Sherif, the linking together of the most isolated mountain valleys in this split-up land, the temporary or permanent migration of the Berbers to the growing cities of the North, where they are rapidly Arabized, all tend in the same direction. Beyond doubt, Morocco is on the way to becoming a nation, and an Arab one. But her disunity lies only two decades back, and wherever one leaves the immediate vicinity of the cities the slowly crumbling walls that encircle even the most wretched hamlet remind one of the recent past with its ceaseless feudal and tribal vendettas, banditry, and constant lawlessness. The inner unity of Morocco is still a fragile thing, and it is more than questionable whether, without the Protectorate, it could be held together under the banner of an Arab nationalism that for the Berber is still bound up with the fresh memory of a more oppressive foreign rule than that of the French.

For many Western tourists and journalists, Morocco has become simply the land of the *"bidonvilles,"* the shanty towns on the outskirts of the new ports and industrial cities in which the Istiqlal has discovered what is for Western eyes the most striking and incriminating indictment of "French imperialism." The Istiqlal's "guides" immediately take every visiting journalist on the same auto tour whose minimal program, in Casablanca, includes two huge *bidonvilles,* Ben M'Sik and Carrière Centrale, each with forty to fifty thousand inhabitants.

In the capital at Rabat, one is shown through the more rustic "duars," in which all types of structures from mud huts to nomad tents are mixed together. Here the Istiqlal guide forgets to mention that the lovely villa overlooking one of these duars from an eminence on the bank of the Bou Regreg belongs to a rich landowner to whom the inhabitants of the duar pay extortionate rent. This landowner is the former Pasha Bargash, uncle of the editor of the nationalist newspaper *El Alam,* which organizes the Istiqlal-guided tours through the colonies of the "victims of colonialism." The social conscience of the Moroccan notables is not troubled, however, because God wills that

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French rule are only too eager to put the blame for the troubles in North Africa on such a universally recognized incarnation of evil, but the only truth in their claims that the Communists are "behind" the Istiqlal, the Néo-Destour, and the Algerian nationalists lies in the fact that in all three cases the Reds try to hang on to the coattails of these movements.

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the community of believers should include both rich and poor, pashas and beggars, tribute-receivers and tribute-payers.

The *bidonvilles* repeat a picture that was presented in the last century by all the mushrooming industrial cities of Europe, and even more recently by those of America. But the effect of the contrast in Morocco is heightened by the confrontation of two different ages and worlds. The European colonists, entrepreneurs, and merchants bring with them, if they can, a European type of housing, often inflated into a pompous "colonial style." Similarly, the migrants who stream in from the plateau, the Atlas, and the oases bring with them their huts of mud and straw, their barracks, and their tents. Cynical as it may sound, the wooden barracks of the *bidonvilles* often represent progress as compared with the usual native home in the Moroccan hinterland; they are also more healthy than, for instance, so rich and holy a city as Fez, where a maze of dark alleys full of pedestrians, peddlers, beggars, donkeys, donkey-drivers, children, garbage, and excrement becomes a stifling cloud of dust on sunny days and a knee-deep swamp on rainy ones. And in the midst of this almost sanitation-proof squalor, rise splendid mosques and palaces. But the truth may be formulated even more cynically: the *bidonvilles* are true products of colonization, for without colonization most of their inhabitants would have died in infancy or been carried off by disease or starvation before ever having a chance to settle in them.

The problem has a simple cause, and throughout the entire Orient it is the same. In 1910, before the establishment of the Protectorate, Morocco suported about 3,000,000 inhabitants. Drought, famine, disease, high infant mortality, and constant feudal and tribal wars kept the population stable, or periodically "rectified" it. The pacification of the country under the Protectorate guaranteed security; the successful struggle against epidemics, which have disappeared since the end of the 30's, and the importation of food from overseas in the years of crop failure, as well as industrialization and the reclamation of wasteland—all these combined to eliminate the checks on high fertility that operate among almost all backward peoples. Today Morocco has about 9,000,000 inhabitants, and every passing day brings another 500 to claim food, clothing, and shelter. As rapid as Morocco's economic expansion has been in the last three decades, it has been unable to keep pace with this population increase.

It is not true that the land of the Moroccans was taken away, as the Istiqlal propagandists assert; the million acres of European landholdings, concentrated around Mekhnes and the Atlantic coastal stretch from Casablanca to Rabat, lay barren and treeless before 1912. The arable land cultivated by Moroccans rose between the two world wars from 5,000,000 to 11,250,000 acres, and the irrigation program now being carried out will reclaim enough land for about 800,000 Moroccan families. Yet a vagary of the unpredictable Moroccan climate, like the drought of 1945, is enough to send the surplus population of the worst-hit districts pouring into the cities; the opening up of communications has granted them this way out of what was once an inescapable catastrophe. Whole families and even villages pawn their land and trek to the ports and industrial cities, where they try to bridge the emergency and support their families until the next harvest by working as miners or factory hands, porters or shoeshiners, peddlers or beggars. They always plan to redeem their land some day, and in fact billions of francs in wages saved up in the *bidonvilles* of the north end up each year in the mountain villages and oases of south and east.

ONLY slowly is a settled Moroccan proletariat emerging from this fluctuating mass of migrants. The population of the tin-can cities is still made up of simple, frugal sons of shepherds and peasants who ask for little except a quick way of earning the money they need for their families and the redemption of their land. They almost all intend to go back to their villages, and meanwhile feel far better off on the outskirts of town, where they often dwell in tribal fashion, than inside the stifling Arab cities themselves.

It is true that the European settlers took care of themselves first in building the cities and establishing public services, schools, and hospitals. The hermits and ascetics who, going to backward lands, lower their own standard of living to that of the natives are few. But no official policy invited the influx that descends seasonally on the outskirts of every European city in Morocco—even where, as in Port Lyautey, there was previously not the slightest trace of a native settlement. In Casablanca, after the old *medina* was filled to overflowing, a new *medina* was built. After the Second

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World War the much too small, much too ambitious, and much too expensive Arab model development of Ain-Shok was added. Together, these offer accommodation to 160,000 Moroccans, not counting some 10,000 well-off natives scattered through the European quarter. But the population of Casablanca has risen since 1912 from 20,000 to almost 600,000.

One cannot correctly appraise France's colonizing achievement in Morocco without seeing what has been accomplished as well as what is lacking. It certainly need not fear comparison with conditions in the independent states of the Arab League. And the criticism of the Istiqlal would be more convincing if this party of rich men and potentates had given a single indication that it was prepared or able to take the slightest initiative or make the slightest sacrifice to solve the economic and social problems of Morocco—or even recognize them. What it wants is easy to understand: it wants to exercise power in its own country—and to exercise it just as before. But the face of Morocco, which has changed more than its elite, hardly makes that possible.

Tunisia Struggles for Independence

Of the three countries of French North Africa, Tunisia is the smallest, but also the richest and most fertile by nature, and the best balanced economically. It suffers less from population pressure, its social contrasts are not so glaring, and the native standard of living is higher. It best combines the prerequisites for an independent national development. A clever and gentle, almost effeminate people (there is an Arab proverb: "The Moroccan is a warrior, the Algerian a man, the Tunisian a woman"), the Tunisians have acquired from a succession of civilizations and colonizations—beginning with Phoenician Carthage—an incredible capacity for understanding and adaptation. Tunis has the broadest and best educated intellectual class in North Africa, in terms of both Arab and French culture. It has a prosperous native bourgeoisie and peasantry, as well as a genuinely autonomous trade union organization—perhaps the only genuine trade union organization in the Arab world. And it has the most "Western" of all nationalist movements.

It is significant that it is just in Tunisia that the conflict between European and Arab has become sharpest; it is a sign that the country has come of age. The present crisis is not the first of its kind, but it is one of the most serious, for it follows immediately upon a promising experiment that will not find so good a chance a second time. The experiment began in the summer of 1950, with the installation of the Chenik cabinet, which for the first time really represented political currents in Tunisia. The participation in this cabinet of the Néo-Destour brought it the official blessing of Tunisian nationalism, and it set out with a clear political program approved by the French Resident, Perillier, and by Foreign Minister Schuman: one of step-by-step transition to democratic self-government. The subsequent events leading to the present impasse are well known. The French colonists in Tunisia raged against the Resident, Franco-Tunisian negotiations collapsed, Tunis complained to the United Nations. Perillier was removed and replaced by a reactionary, de Hautecloque, who on his own responsibility had the Chenik cabinet arrested and established a real despotism in Tunisia.

The question at issue is not, or up to now was not, the economic, political, or strategic position of France in Tunis. The Tunisian nationalists were ready to bring their country into the "French Union" as its first full and voluntary member. But they were not ready to share the internal administration of the country with the French colonists, and no step toward Tunisian self-government was possible without a clear decision on this. The sole parliamentary body previously existing in Tunis was the Grand Council, a consultative group divided equally between the French settlers and Tunisian notables. Its transformation into an elective Tunisian Assembly with legislative power was agreed upon in principle. But the even more resolute Tunisian demand that this parliament be composed exclusively of Tunisians, and elected solely by the Tunisian subjects of the Bey, met with violent opposition from the European colony. Preparations for elected communal councils were held up by the same issue. Should French citizens in Tunis be represented in these on a basis of parity, as they demanded, or even proportionally (which would have the same results in an almost half-European city like Tunis), or should the councils be composed exclusively of citizens of Tunisian nationality? In its note of December 15, 1951, the French Foreign Ministry yielded to the pressure of

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the colonists' lobby in the French parliament and for the first time clearly adopted as its own the colonists' thesis that French citizens in Tunisia could not be excluded from its internal administration. This led to the breakdown of negotiations and the present desperate situation.

For Tunisian spokesmen of all political shades, "co-sovereignty" with the French colonists is an offense against the principles of constitutional and international law. To be sure, Tunisia is under a French protectorate, but its statehood has never been disputed. The Protectorate treaty is an international treaty, and the French Resident is accredited to the Bey of Tunis by the French Foreign Ministry. The French settlers there, like any other immigrants who do not individually acquire Tunisian nationality, are legally foreigners. And who ever heard of foreigners taking part in the election of the parliament and the communal councils of a country where they were guests?

On the other hand, it is altogether understandable if the French settlers, who used to be not only at home in Tunisia but masters, are scandalized by the sudden proposal that they be treated as foreigners with "nothing to say here." They regard modern Tunisia as their creation. They have built and administered it, they have brought it sanitation, irrigation, and electrification. More than half of them were born on Tunisian soil. If France does not protect their well-earned rights, they declare, they will act in self-defense. This threat of civil war raises its head in almost every conversation with French colonists today, and at the beginning of this year it was very near reality.

THAT matters became so envenomed is largely due to the composition of the European colony in Tunisia. If these colonists were, as in Morocco, pioneers opening up a country just emerging from the Middle Ages, they would have nothing to fear even were their legal status that of foreigners. If they were a genuine colony rooted in the country for a century, as in Algeria, the question of whether they were foreigners could not be seriously raised. But the bulk of the European colony in Tunisia is the unhappy result of an ill-starred policy of high-pressure settlement undertaken to compete with Italy's irredentist claims, which rested on the far greater number of immigrants of Italian origin in Tunisia. The "French" of Tunisia are for the most part compulsorily naturalized Sicilians, Maltese, and Spaniards. Most of them have shown no superiority, either of intellect or accomplishment, over the Tunisian "Orientals." Their French patriotism, so vociferously proclaimed today, was quite doubtful during the recent war. French landholdings consist mainly of large plantations most of whose owners live abroad, and which are more affairs of financial speculation than pioneering. And even the genuine French settlers are in large part Corsican rather than French—and essentially parasites nesting in the fat cheese of the Protectorate and filling every last official post with members of their clan. In many cases the only thing European about them is their trousers.

This kind of colonist, who asserts so angrily that the Tunisians are not fit to run their own country or even their own post office, has everything to lose. His carefree existence is justified by no achievements, yet he has all the privileges of a colonial official. Such a colonist defends neither France nor any civilizing mission, but only his own existence, and he defends it all the more stubbornly because he is superfluous. Playing with civil war is for him a quite deliberate tactic, and one that cannot fail in the short run. The deeper the chasm between France and native Tunisia, the more inescapably must a weak French government—and especially a conservative one like Pinay's—stand behind its "threatened sons" in Tunisia. And the price is paid by the genuine settlers, who are fleeing their scattered farms in panic.

Perhaps the road to the solution is a reform of the Tunisian bureaucracy. And the one part of the reform program of 1950 that has really been put into action is the step-by-step transfer of administrative posts from French to Tunisian hands. But all experience teaches us how slow and confused, even with a better will than exists in Tunisia today, such a process as the renovation of a bureaucracy must be under the normal procedures of recruiting, retirement, and dying off; if all new appointments were now reserved for Tunisians, it would still take a generation for the administration to become Tunisian. It is extremely doubtful whether the advanced stage of the crisis will leave time for such detours. In the hate-filled atmosphere of recent months all compromise proposals have met deaf ears on both sides. The move placing the Tunisian struggle before the United Nations has led so far only to further adamancy on both sides in anticipation of a general debate.

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In Tunisia, as elsewhere in North Africa, the conflict is not between France and the North African countries, but between colonists and natives. A French government crippled by domestic discord and dependent for its existence on every parliamentary pressure group, and a Foreign Minister beset from all sides and desperately trying to save his European policy, have for the moment handed Tunisian policy over to the colonists in Tunis and let them run amok. The result is a shambles. It is urgent to return the control of French Tunisian policy to Paris, otherwise France's whole North African structure will collapse. For the tremors in each of these lands carry over automatically into the others.

THE mistakes made in Tunisia can be repaired. If they are not, if French North Africa is broken up, that dangerous "blighted area" which is the Middle East will extend from the Persian Gulf to the Atlantic. The West parceled up the supranational empires of Austria-Hungary and Turkey in the name of nationalism and the self-determination of peoples, without even a moment's consideration as to how a people would become a nation and achieve the ability to determine its own fate. In place of the Austrian empire, Eastern Europe was littered with pseudo-national states, few of which were able to preserve their independence for even a generation. In the name of the same principle we are now about to liquidate the remnant of the Western European empires, without having even the excuse of 1918 that the consequences could not be foreseen. Nationalism is beyond question one of the great forces—or psychoses—of our time. But after so many catastrophic experiences, it is time to recognize that, to date, not a single one of the newly concocted "nations" of the 20th century has benefited from its nationalism. They have merely furnished the great powers with pawns and pretexts for conflict. It is easy to destroy historical patterns with their burden of historical failings, but it is usually impossible to put the pieces together again.

Carthage must *not* be destroyed.

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THE SECTARIAN CONFLICT OVER CHURCH & STATE

A Divisive Threat to Our Democracy?

WILL HERBERG

MORE than once in recent months, Rabbi Philip S. Bernstein has had occasion to note with concern the marked deterioration of Protestant-Catholic relations in this country and to warn Jews against exacerbating these tensions. Indeed, the widening conflict within the Christian community may well constitute a major problem far overshadowing in its immediacy the more familiar problem of Jewish-Christian relations. Many thoughtful observers, Catholics, Protestants, and Jews, are disturbed over the cleavage, but few display any real conception of the gravity of the threat which this increasing divisiveness holds for democracy; and fewer still show any clarity on the fundamental issues involved. Some sober, searching thinking seems to be called for if a sharpening of the conflict is to be avoided.

I

ALTHOUGH it would be a mistake to see the situation primarily in terms of isolated issues, it is still worth noting that the most persistent occasion for Protestant-Catholic conflict in recent years has been the issue of church and state in education. Even in this problem many aspects are intertwined. There is first the question of basic attitude to the public schools, particularly in connection with the religious day schools which the Catholic Church and some Protestant denominations are conducting. But there is also the question of the role of religion in the public school pattern, and finally the most hotly debated issue of governmental assistance to non-public schools. Each of these questions, moreover, is loaded with all sorts of implications that range far beyond the particular points of conflict.

We must remind ourselves that the American public school system is preeminently the creation of American Protestantism. It was established because of the deep Protestant concern for popular education and assumed its characteristic "secular" form because of the American Protestant distaste for ecclesiastical control. This was particularly true of the Congregationalists in New England and of the Baptists and Methodists in the more outlying parts of the expanding nation. To this very day, these groups feel a deep emotional—one might even say, proprietary—interest in the public school, despite the vast changes that have taken place in the inner character of public education in the course of the past half-century. And yet American Protestantism, for all its strongly affirmative attitude to the public schools, has in the past two decades become increasingly troubled over certain developments in public education and has been trying, though not very successfully, to understand and deal with the problems that these developments have created.

When the public school system first came into being in this country, it was nonsectarian rather than non-religious. And nonsectarian in those days meant all-Protestant,

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THE past two years have seen a sharp rise in religious controversy and polemic, centering chiefly around aid to religious schools, released time, and the general issue of the separation of church and state. But it is hardly a secret that this public discussion has been accompanied by a storm of discussion raging privately among the various denominations. WILL HERBERG joins the debate with his own strongly felt convictions, which we daresay will evoke equally strong counter-argument. Author of *Judaism for Modern Man,* Mr. Herberg has in recent years won wide recognition as a fresh voice in the world of modern religious thought. His present article is the latest in a series of expressions of diverse opinions on the church-state issue which have appeared in these pages in the past several years, and which we intend to continue. Readers further interested are directed to J. M. O'Neill's "Church, Schools, and the Constitution," and Milton R. Konvitz's "Whittling Away Religious Freedom" in our June 1947 and June 1946 issues respectively.

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since non-Protestant groups were of relatively little social or cultural importance in most parts of the nation. It was taken for granted that religion, in the generalized Protestant sense, was the foundation of education, though the schools were not of course to be used to favor one Protestant denomination over another. In its *ethos*, the public school, as well as the community at large, was Christian and Protestant.

To a minor extent, this is still the case in some parts of the country. But by and large, under the impact of newly emerging social and cultural forces, the public school system has become something very different from what it was three-quarters or even half a century ago. By the end of the great immigration the country had ceased to be almost entirely Protestant; Catholics now make up a large part of the population, and so do Jews in certain urban centers. For these and like reasons, nonsectarian may no longer be equated with a generalized Protestantism; indeed, it has rapidly come to mean dissociation from religion as such. An important contributing factor has been the very considerable secularization of the Protestant consciousness itself in recent years. Administratively, public education today reflects the changing structure of the American community, with Catholics and Jews occupying positions of influence side by side with Protestants. But even more striking is the change in the *spirit* of public school education, which today is no longer religious, neither Catholic, nor Protestant, nor Jewish; it is, by and large, *secularist*, even militantly so. (I use this term to signify an outlook on life in which man is held to be sufficient unto himself and God disappears as an unnecessary, outmoded concept.) The most influential educational philosophies and centers of teachers' training are self-consciously secularist, and so is educational practice in almost every part of the country. From nonsectarian, the public school has become "neutral" in matters of religion. As a matter of fact, many charge that this neutrality is no neutrality at all, that in effect our schools positively indoctrinate a substitute faith, arguing: "If you teach no religion at all, you are teaching a new cult, secularism."

It would be a mistake to think that most Protestants in this country have such a picture of the situation. Most of them take the "neutrality" of the public school at its face value, and indeed see little difference between what emerges from this "neutrality" and their own "liberal" Protestantism, which (I use the words of a well-known Protestant teacher) is "sometimes not to be distinguished from humanism or mere ethical culture." But many important Protestant leaders are deeply concerned, even alarmed. This concern, however, has resulted in very little, in part because of a confusion of counsel, but primarily because Protestant concern about the schools has been thoroughly bedeviled by an all-absorbing preoccupation with the Catholic "menace."

CATHOLICS, on their part, never took the American public school to their hearts as did the Protestants. It was not of their creation, and did not in the beginning, any more than it does today, accord with their philosophy of education. Catholics cannot see any proper education for Catholic children that is not religiously grounded and religiously oriented, and that of course means grounded and oriented in Catholic faith. For the Catholic, therefore, the only really acceptable educational institution, particularly on the lower levels, is the church school, usually parochial in structure and administration. Indeed, probably half of the Catholic children of public school age in this country attend parochial schools; in 1947-48, there were 2,305,000 students in elementary church schools, 482,000 in secondary schools, and nearly 300,000 in more advanced institutions. The total number of Catholic schools was 10,900. The goal has never changed: "A seat in a Catholic school for every Catholic child." This is not a matter of varying "opinion"; it is a matter of conscience and canon law.

Increasingly, certain Protestant groups, alarmed at the effects of public school "neutralism," have moved in the same direction. Protestant religious day schools are by no means new to this country; in 1830, there were some 400 Lutheran schools in the United States, but these schools were motivated as much by ethnic cultural reasons (to preserve the German "language and heritage") as by religious; and to an extent, this is still true of the "Continental"

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churches in this country, though decreasingly so. The present-day movement toward religious day schools under Protestant auspices is predominantly of a religious character. Compared to the vast Catholic structure, the Protestant day schools still amount to very little: in 1951-52, the over-all figure was 2,904 schools, almost entirely elementary, with about 190,000 pupils.* But this represented a 61 per cent increase over 1937, and the movement is definitely gaining momentum. Its philosophy is well expressed in the recent pronouncement of President Henry Van Dusen of Union Theological Seminary: "Unless religious instruction can be included in the program of the public school, church leaders will be driven increasingly to the expedient of the church-sponsored school." The Protestant position, even where it favors church schools, is by no means so categorical as the Catholic. On the whole, Protestants regard the church school not as something desirable in itself, but as something which they may some day have to accept because of the "religious failure" of the public school. Protestantism is still "for" the public school, but no longer without reservations.

THE spread of the religious day school has brought to the fore the problem of the relation of the government to such schools. This problem cannot be solved simply by repeating the hallowed formula of the "separation of church and state." It is agreed on all sides that the First Amendment definitely prohibits the *establishment* of an official religion, or government action in any way *favoring* one religious denomination over another. But does it bar any and every governmental action extending aid *on an equal basis* to all religious groups? To this there is no unequivocal answer. In the McCollum case (1948), the Supreme Court seemed to say yes, but that is not what it said four years later in the New York released-time case. We may leave the exegesis of Supreme Court decisions to the proper authorities; it is, however, a matter of historical fact that neither in the minds of the Founding Fathers nor in the thinking of the American people through the 19th and into the 20th century, did the "separation of church and state" imply unconcern with, much less hostility to, religion on the part of the government. Indeed, the promotion of religion was always held to be one of the prime objects of public education. The Northwest Ordinance, a classical expression of early national concern with education, laid it down that: "Religion, morality, and knowledge being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged. . . ." And Jefferson himself, writing thirty-one years after the ratification of the First Amendment, stated in a discussion of public education: "It was not, however, to be understood that instruction in religious opinion and duties was meant to be precluded by the public authorities, as indifferent to the interests of society. On the contrary, the relations which exist between Man and his Maker, and the duties resulting from those relations, are the most interesting and important to every human being, and the most incumbent on his study and investigation." Public education in this country generally operated on this principle during the earlier part of its history.

It is simply not true, despite the widespread notion to the contrary, that there exists or has ever existed in the United States a "high and impregnable wall of separation between church and state" (Justice Black's words). The federal government has always given, and continues to this very day to give, direct aid to religious bodies, though of course on an equal and non-discriminatory basis. It pays the salaries of chaplains, religious functionaries selected by their churches and assigned to the various branches of the armed services; it has appropriated and spent money, at various times and in various ways, to spread Christianity among the Indians; it exempts churches and church institutions from taxation. As for church schools, provided they meet the specified educational standards, they are fully recognized and protected by law (Oregon case, 1925); their certificates and credentials are received on a par with those of

*It is significant that nearly a majority of the schools (1,410) are Lutheran. Seventh Day Adventists run a close second with 919. The great denominations of a pietistic cast—Methodists and Baptists—are almost unrepresented: 15 schools are listed for the latter, none for the former.

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public institutions; they are the recipients of considerable financial assistance from the public authorities (textbooks, Cochran case, 1930; bus transportation, Everson case, 1947; school lunches, National School Lunch Act, 1946). The question, therefore, is not so much *whether* church schools may be aided by public authorities, as *in what way* and *to what extent* they may be so aided; this question, however, cannot be answered with abstract formulas; there is, moreover, wide disagreement on it, not only among but within the various denominations.

THE position of the Catholic Church is that church schools (of all denominations, of course) are morally entitled to receive aid from public funds on a par with the public schools because they too perform a public educational function. In addition to religious instruction, which is itself of public concern, these schools, it is contended, carry on a program of general education specified by public authority and accepted as fulfilling a public requirement under the compulsory school laws. Catholic parents complain that they are saddled with a double burden, being obliged to support the schools which their children attend as well as the public schools of which they cannot in conscience make use. Catholic spokesmen are emphatic in denying that they are "against" the public schools. They are quite ready to support them for the use of those who find them acceptable; they do, however, ask that their own schools, which they say occupy a "semi-public" status, should also be supported.

This attitude is more or less in line with the practice prevailing today in Canada, Great Britain, and other countries, where denominational schools regularly receive support from the public funds. And it has been advocated in this country by many non-Catholics, by some even who are devoid of any religious concern but are moved by considerations of what they take to be equity and the public welfare. I recall a surprisingly large number of people with whom I discussed the matter, people of all shades of opinion, who, "off the record" and "in principle," substantially endorsed the Catholic claim, but hastened to add that it was out of the question to advocate it in public at this time. And indeed it is, as Catholics themselves acknowledge. As a matter of immediate strategy, therefore, Catholics have concentrated on federal legislation to supply the so-called "auxiliary" services (social services, textbooks, transportation, etc.) to parochial school children along with those in the public schools.

Here they have come into conflict with much of official Protestant opinion. Protestants have tended to denounce all proposals to extend auxiliary services to church school children on the ground that they are merely disguised forms of "direct aid," thus constituting a breach in the "wall" that is alleged to separate church and state. Some Protestants are so conscientiously committed to this view that they specifically include their own institutions among those which they demand should be barred from public aid; Baptist leaders have protested against government assistance to their own church hospitals, and there have even been voices raised against the public maintenance of military and prison chaplains. But on the whole, the crusade for the preservation of the "wall of separation" between church and state in education as elsewhere is conceived by Protestants as a defensive campaign against Catholic "aggression."

THIS feeling, which most Protestants seem to share, is the key to the current embitterment of Protestant-Catholic relations. "The nub of the whole matter," comments the *Information Service* of the Federal (now National) Council of Churches in its September 10, 1949 issue, "clearly seems to be the fear on the part of non-Catholics of the political power and purposes of the Roman Church." This defensive psychology appears to be rapidly permeating American Protestantism. Practically every Protestant leader with whom I discussed the matter referred in vague but disturbed terms to the "ominous growth" of the Catholic Church in this country and expressed grave concern over what the future might bring. One, in fact, called my attention to the "portent" of a Catholic majority (52 per cent, he said) in Holland, a classic land of Protestantism. "In another generation," he exclaimed almost in anguish, "we'll be a minority; America too will be Catholic."

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This fear of Catholic domination of the United States would at first hardly seem to be borne out by statistics. In the twenty-four-year period from 1926 to 1950, church membership in this country increased by 59.8 per cent, as against a 28.6 per cent increase in population. The Catholic Church grew by 53.9 per cent, but in the same period Protestantism increased by 63.7 per cent. Most of this increase, however, was accounted for by the expansion of the Baptists, especially the Southern Baptists. The churches affiliated with the National Council, the authoritative national federation of Protestant (and some Eastern Orthodox) churches, grew only by 47.7 per cent, falling short of the total increase as well as of the comparable Roman Catholic growth. It cannot be denied that in those parts of the country in which Protestants and Catholics come into direct contact, particularly in the urban centers, the Catholic Church has been making notable headway.

More important even than the numerical growth is the comparatively vigorous institutional and cultural life of the Catholic Church, its really amazing skill in presenting itself attractively to the public, and the intellectual prestige it has lately acquired from the work of a number of artists, philosophers, and writers, mostly European. Catholic churches are full, where Protestant churches so frequently remain half empty. Catholic thinking, at least as seen from the outside, is aggressive and self-confident, whereas so much of American Protestant thinking, except on the very highest seminary levels, is thoroughly enfeebled by the abstractions of "liberalism" and "humanism." Catholic religiosity has "substance" and numinous power, while—here one can cite ample testimony from Protestant self-evaluation—much of American Protestantism is little more than an emotionalized ethic and gospel of social service. And finally, Catholicism possesses unity and a fighting front, while Protestantism is fragmented, divided, and apparently incapable of any positive cohesion. Protestantism, in short, has lost the initiative; it has been thrown on the defensive, and what is worse, it has developed a defensive minority-group psychology in which it sees itself threatened on all sides. All this is not my own judgment, although I would not disagree with it; it is substantially the analysis presented to me by a distinguished Protestant theologian, who expressed himself more concerned over the "loss of morale" in Protestantism than over the plots the Catholic Church might be hatching.

Nor that there is no ground whatever for concern over Catholic power in the United States. Catholic power does constitute a problem for American democracy. It constitutes a problem first in the sense in which every potent special-interest group makes the workings of the democratic government more complex. Beyond that, it is a problem because the traditionally formulated political and social aims of the Catholic Church sometimes run counter to what most Americans hold to be the democratic way of life. The claims and pretensions of the Church to legal primacy, if not monopoly, in religion, education, and family relations, seem to many, as they do to me, incompatible, in their authoritarianism, with the liberal, pluralistic foundations of American democracy.

Equally disturbing is the Church's tendency to confuse, or rather to equate, the spiritual interests of Christianity with the political and social, even economic, interests of the Vatican, the hierarchy, and the Church establishment. Catholics in America have sometimes employed the preponderance of power that has fallen to them in certain localities and states in ways that have given much offense to other citizens.

All this may be granted. And yet the Protestant reaction has surely been far out of proportion to any conceivable threat or provocation. There has been, in ordinary Protestant thinking on the Catholic issue, little or no sense of the relativities of politics, little or no sense of the very considerable gap that often separates the phrases of a creed from the actualities of a concrete situation. Everything is painted in the strongest colors without discrimination or mitigation, so that the resulting picture is often grossly false even when some of the details are in themselves not very far from the truth. "Most American non-Catholics," Reinhold Niebuhr points out, "have a very inaccurate concept of Roman Catholic political thought and life. In this concept, it is assumed that

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if Catholics anywhere had their way, they would at once build a political structure as much like Spain's as possible. . . . Some forms of deduction proceed on the assumption that on any and every question a religious group's political attitude is dictated by its basic creed. Others do not even bother to start with the group's actual basic tenets but with the tenets which the group is imagined to hold." ("Catholics and Politics: Some Misconceptions," *The Reporter,* January 22, 1952.)

Consider the vast excitement over the "Vatican appointment." Whatever may be thought of the wisdom or the timeliness of President Truman's proposal to appoint an envoy to the Vatican, only by the wildest stretch of the imagination can it be regarded as unconstitutional or a threat to the religious liberties of any group of Americans. Yet American Protestantism reacted to this proposal with a violence and fury that have given thoughtful Protestants pause. The only unity of which American Protestantism seems capable, it has been sadly noted, is unity against Rome. The major "Vatican lesson," *Social Action* (Congregational) for May 1952 ruefully points out, is that "the psychological basis of much of American Protestantism lies in a negative rejection of Roman Catholicism. . . . The one emotional loyalty that of a certainty binds us together as Protestants . . . is the battle against Rome."

It is this Protestant negativism and defensiveness that has opened the way for the strange alliance between a considerable section of American Protestantism and the forces of militant secularism, an alliance organizationally represented by the Protestants and Other Americans United for the Separation of Church and State (POAU), launched some years ago under the auspices of *Christian Century* and a number of high Protestant dignitaries. It is this negativism and defensiveness that has made possible the "similarity" which a Federal Council of Churches report notes "between official Protestant pronouncements and the typical secularist position on all points discussed [in relation to religion, education, and the schools]." It is this that has driven American Protestants to interpret the separation of church and state to mean the abdication by religion of its responsibilities in large areas of social life and the abandonment of those areas to non- and anti-religious influences and control. American Protestantism has, in fact, conceded the primary secularist claim that religion is strictly a "private affair" and that culture and social life are to be built on humanistic foundations. But humanism and secular autonomy are now on the wane in many quarters, and so, by an astounding reversal of intention, American Protestantism, itself more religiously concerned today, has withdrawn as a religious influence in many areas, and thus has actually left the field free to the Catholic Church, which has naturally not failed to take full advantage.

This anomalous situation is very well illustrated in the attitude adopted toward public education. The theory behind public education is traditionally very different in the United States and Great Britain from what it is on the Continent, and the difference is instructive. In Britain and America, the government engages in public education because experience has shown that this is the only way to provide adequate educational opportunities for the mass of the people; the government is obliged to do what individual and group effort has not been able to do. But wherever individuals or groups (non-governmental agencies) can offer the proper facilities, they have the clear right to compete with the government and are entitled to recognition and encouragement by the public authorities. In other words, the Anglo-American system is pluralistic. In France and in other Continental countries, however, the concept of public education, at least as propounded by its accredited spokesmen, is something altogether different. Public education is there looked upon not as a device for making up the inadequacies of individual or group effort, but as a "natural" activity of the state designed primarily to inculcate a common doctrine and create a uniform mentality among the citizens. From this point of view, private individuals and non-state institutions (churches, for example) really have no business in the field of education; they are rivals of the state and such rivalry is held to be intrinsically "antisocial," even though under the circumstances

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it may have to be grudgingly tolerated. Of late, we have become increasingly aware that this doctrine, despite its popularity among Continental liberals and socialists, and its spread in this country, has a marked authoritarian, even totalitarian, potential.

The Supreme Court decision in the celebrated Oregon case (*Pierce v. The Society of Sisters,* 1925) made explicit the fundamental American doctrine on the question: ". . . the right of parents to direct the rearing and education of their children, free from any general power of the state to standardize children by forcing them to accept instruction from public school teachers only." To this may be added a reference to a more recent decision (*Prince v. Massachusetts,* 1944) in which the Supreme Court declared: "It is cardinal with us that the custody, care, and nurture of the child reside first in the parents, whose primary function and freedom include preparation for obligations the state can neither supply nor hinder." This is a doctrine that goes beyond particular Supreme Court decisions since it lies at the foundation of any tenable conception of constitutional democracy and the limited-power state.

American secularist educators are by no means reconciled to this doctrine. They still feel that the public school is the only "proper" educational institution which all children should somehow be required to attend in order that they might be protected against "divisive cultural influences" and helped to acquire a "common outlook." These educators are constantly on the watch for some way of circumventing the intent of the Oregon decision. "A more satisfactory compulsory education law," Professor John L. Childs of Teachers College, Columbia, has suggested, "might be one in which the state would require each child to spend at least one half of the compulsory school period in the common, or public, schools. Many Americans hope that states will pioneer in legislation of this sort." Max Lerner is even more forthright. He has declared that "the first step [in breaking down the separation principle] was taken when the Supreme Court decided that a religious group could not be compelled to send its children to the public schools, and it could run its own schools at its own expense."

IN A WAY, of course, Max Lerner is right. State recognition, toleration, and protection of religious schools *is* a breach in any *absolute* separation of church and state. But such absolute separation was never contemplated by the Founding Fathers, is not written into the Constitution, and has never been the policy or practice of the federal or state governments; it is simply the eager dream of those who have no patience with the traditional faiths and desire them replaced by their own non- or anti-religious faith. The startling thing is that so much of Protestant opinion in recent decades has tended to go along with this concept of separation, to the point indeed of applauding Paul Blanshard when he denounces Catholics for affirming that they would disobey a law banning religious schools and compelling them to send their children to the public schools. Surely it needs very little unbiased consideration to recognize that this attitude, even though held by Catholics, is thoroughly in line with the best of democratic tradition, which has always tended to check pretensions of the state to a monopoly of social and cultural life.

The fact of the matter seems to be that in its inordinate preoccupation with defending itself and America against Catholic aggression, American Protestantism has surrendered intellectual leadership to non-religious forces and has been fighting the battle for the separation of church and state under essentially secularist slogans. In making "Blanshardism" its semi-official philosophy, it has done no service to Protestantism, to Christianity, or to the cause of religion in general.

Nor has it done any service to democracy. For "Blanshardism," or rather the anti-Catholic animus it articulates, seems to me to constitute a much more serious threat to our democracy than any of the horrendous Romanist plots that Paul Blanshard has been so fond of conjuring up to make our flesh creep.

"This kind of reasoning," says Reinhold Niebuhr, who has never hesitated to criticize Catholic teaching and practice, "is highly damaging to the mutual understanding upon which a democracy must rest. Democracy requires more careful and discriminate judgments about friend and foe, particularly since a political foe upon one

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issue in a vast welter of issues may be a friend on another." American Catholicism is not without its share of responsibility for what Milton Konvitz has called the "frightening growth of Protestant-Catholic tensions," but the major share, it seems to me, must be laid at the door of Protestantism, which has permitted itself to be maneuvered into an unreal, contradictory, and panicky position.

II

WHAT has been the Jewish position on these questions? Strictly speaking, of course, there is no single Jewish position, even less so than there is a single Protestant position. But there are the pronouncements of responsible Jewish leaders and institutions, and the stand taken in particular cases by accredited Jewish agencies, from which a "Jewish position" is often inferred by other religious groups and the public at large. Insofar as such a "Jewish position" may be thus inferred, it is one that, in my opinion, should give grave concern to every American Jew.

It can hardly be denied that the intervention of most Jewish bodies in the current church and state controversy has generally not tended to allay the sharpening religious cleavage in American life. It has often operated on principles in some ways even more extreme and basically secular than those of the Protestant guardians of the "wall of separation." It has shown little understanding of the realities of the educational and cultural situation as it confronts the religious parents, Christian or Jewish, who take their faith seriously as the substance of life.

Religious leaders, lay educators, and parent groups have in recent years become increasingly disturbed over the religious vacuum in public education, which is felt to have serious moral and spiritual consequences. With due consideration to constitutional limitations, a number of ways have been proposed to strengthen the foundations of the public school by compensating for the religious emptiness that is devitalizing it. President Van Dusen of Union Theological Seminary and former Dean Weigle of Yale have suggested a "common core" program of religious education; others have looked to various schemes of dismissed or released time to provide a partial remedy. All of these suggestions are animated by the desire to preserve the public school for its undoubted merits as a vehicle of cultural unification and to obviate the necessity of establishing separate church schools.

How has the most vocal Jewish opinion reacted to these proposals? Almost entirely in the negative, and often violently: spokesmen representing a broad segment of organized Jewish community life applauded the Supreme Court's invalidation of released time in the McCollum case, joined in the opposition to the New York released-time program and criticized the Supreme Court's validation of it, opposed Bible readings in schools, opposed the New York Board of Regents' suggestion of a daily prayer, and of course opposed every variety of aid, direct or indirect, to religious schools. I am not trying to make a case for any of these plans or programs; they may all be very properly criticized as impracticable and ineffective. Indeed, it may even be contended, with considerable show of reason, that under present-day American conditions, with the bewildering diversity of cult that characterizes our "pluralistic" society, the practical difficulties in the way of any acceptable program of religion in the schools are quite insuperable. Perhaps that is so; nevertheless, all of the plans and suggestions, however impracticable in themselves, do point to a problem that cannot be ignored, especially by those who are so much concerned with repelling attacks on the public schools.

WHAT answer have Jewish spokesmen had for parents and educators? Only this: school and religion must be kept rigorously apart; no religion in the school or in any conceivable association with it; let the schools inculcate in the children "basic moral principles" and "social ideals," the place for "religion" is the home and the church. Leaving aside the psychological unreality of this kind of mechanical division of labor, which flies in the face of any view of personality held by modern educators themselves, how can such a reliance upon secularism to do the work of moral education be supported? It is, in fact, not supported. It is simply taken for granted that "basic moral

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principles" and "social ideals" are autonomous, and can and should be established, validated, and inculcated without reference to religion. Nor is any consideration given to the actual realities of the American situation. Many argue that the literally godless education the child receives in the typical public school can be supplemented by religious teaching in home and church. But is it not usually the school, where the child spends so much of his waking day, that exerts the primary formative influence on his mind, so that whatever reactive influence there is, is likely to proceed from school to home, rather than the reverse? The school establishes the priority and prestige of ideas, and the child who becomes habituated in the school to thinking about things exclusively in secular and naturalistic terms is more than likely to regard the religious ideas he finds floating around in the average home or church with indifference and contempt. Even if the home could "compete" with the school for the soul of the child, the very idea of such competition is somehow shocking.

I am not suggesting that all parents feel this way or that the school is exclusively guilty in what has been called the "religious illiteracy" of the American child. On the contrary, many parents, including many Jewish parents, see no place for religion in education, or for that matter in life, and are quite happy at the extrusion of religion from the schools. Even those parents who have a religious interest only too easily tend to overlook their own failure and the failure of the church in their readiness to blame everything on the school. This must be admitted, and yet it remains a fact that to large numbers of our citizens the present pattern seems increasingly questionable. For it operates to make the schools into instruments acting toward and sanctioning the rejection of religion, whereas we Americans are, as the Supreme Court put it in its opinion on the recent New York released-time case, "a religious people whose institutions presuppose a Supreme Being." Need we recall that while the propaganda of atheism is protected under the Constitution, non- or anti-religion has never enjoyed and does not now enjoy the same public status as religion? Anyone who doubts this might try proposing that the federal government commission atheist or "humanist" chaplains on a par with Jewish and Christian! The public school system, in effect, reverses this relation, and makes non- or anti-religion the established "religion" in public education. No wonder that dissatisfaction with the public school has been growing.

OPERATING under a concept of the separation of church and state more rigid and absolute than even that held by doctrinaire Protestants, most Jewish community leaders have paid little heed to these realities of the situation. A few, however, particularly among the Orthodox, have attempted something positive. Feeling it undesirable or impossible to change the character of the public schools, and realizing the feebleness of most after-school religious education, they have undertaken to set up religious day schools. The movement is not yet very extensive. In 1945, there were perhaps 75 such schools throughout the country; today, there may be over 150, almost all operating on the elementary or pre-elementary levels; attendance has increased rather more than proportionately. Some Jewish religious leaders outside the Orthodox camp have endorsed the idea, but lay opinion seems generally opposed. Significant too is the line taken by some of its religious advocates in justifying it. In a recent article defending Jewish day schools, the Orthodox author was very much concerned to point out that after all Jewish day schools were utterly different from analogous Catholic institutions because the latter, the Catholic schools, employed their own religiously oriented textbooks, while the Jewish schools used the regulation public school texts and curricula, merely adding a program of "Jewish knowledge." Note how the "separation of church and state" is now duplicated *within* the Jewish school: all subjects of everyday, worldly concern, presumably not only mathematics, but also history, the social sciences, literature, and the humanities, are taught from the same textbooks and in the same secular spirit as in the public schools; to this is added some "Jewish instruction," which must in the nature of the case be peripheral and irrelevant. So far has the spirit of secularism permeated Jewish thinking, even that which considers itself strongly religious.

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It is worthwhile to pause at this point. I think no informed observer will care to deny that of all comparable groups in this country Jewish community leaders, including leaders in the synagogue, appear most secular-minded in their public attitude on matters of church and state. In what other American religious community, for example, could the proposal be advanced by respected *religious* leaders—out-Blansharding Blanshard—that American democracy be made the vehicle of a "common American faith" to be inculcated in the public schools with all the paraphernalia of a religious cult? Yet that is substantially the idea that a number of influential Jewish religious leaders have been advocating for years. By and large, those who speak for the American Jewish community, whether they be rabbis or laymen, religious individuals or men and women avowedly secular-minded, judging by their public expressions, seem to share the basic secularist presupposition that religion is a "private matter"—in the minimizing sense of "merely private"—and therefore peripheral to the vital areas of social life and culture, which latter are held to have non-religious foundations. Jewish religion, if it is affirmed at all, is affirmed as something to be *added to* the common life, not as something that pervades and is inextricably involved in every aspect of it. Separation of church and state is thus at bottom advocated as only one phase of the separation of religion from life.

How has this come about? How could this isolation of religion from life have arisen in a group with whom religion has traditionally been conceived as coterminous with life? Basically, it seems to me, it is due to the conviction, widely held though rarely articulated, that because the Western Jew achieved emancipation with the secularization of society, he can preserve his free and equal status only so long as culture and society remain secular. Let but religion regain a central place in the everyday life of the community, and the Jew, because he is outside the bounds of the dominant religion, will once again be relegated to the margins of society, displaced, disfranchised culturally if not politically, shorn of rights and opportunities. And it is well to note that by "religion" in this context, it is Christianity that is meant, and by Christianity primarily Catholicism. The Catholic Church still remains in Jewish eyes the standard form of Christianity and the prime symbol of Christian persecution. Deep down, it is Catholic domination that is feared. Such are the anxieties that beset many American Jews, and it cannot be denied that they have much justification. Religion has so often with good conscience been turned into an instrument of exclusive privilege that one can well understand the feeling of those who believe that democracy requires the eviction of religion from public life and the thorough secularization of society.

Yet in the long run such a view is short-sighted and self-defeating. Jewish survival is ultimately conceivable only in religious terms; and when its *raison d'être* is whittled down to a few "supplemental" factors, survival itself loses much of its meaning. Furthermore, a thoroughly "de-religionized" society would make Jewish existence impossible. But a "de-religionized" society is itself for long impossible. Ultimately, man finds the autonomy which secularism offers him an intolerable burden, and he tends to throw it off in favor of some new heteronomy of race or nation, of party or state, that the idolatrous substitute faiths of the time hold out to him. In such idolatrous cultures, the Jew is inevitably the chosen victim; the lesson of history and contemporary experience seems clear on this head. The way of the Jew in the world is not and never will be easy; it will certainly not be made any the easier by his throwing in his lot with an increasingly total secularism, which both invites and is helpless to withstand the demonic idolatries of our time. The American Jew must have sufficient confidence in the capacity of democracy to preserve its pluralistic libertarian character without any *absolute* wall of separation between religion and public life. After all, the Jew is no less free in Britain, where church and state are more closely linked.

The fear felt by Jewish leaders of the possible consequences of a restoration of religion to a vital place in public life is what throws them into an alliance with the secularists and helps make their own thinking so thoroughly secular. They feel the problem primarily in terms of the Jew's status as member

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of a minority group. The minority-group defensiveness, which we noted in contemporary Protestantism, is of course far more intense among Jews; indeed, it may probably be said to be the most influential determinant of the policy and activities of many leading Jewish groups in this country. Public assistance to religious schools, it is felt, would mean overwhelmingly aid to Christian, primarily Catholic schools, with Jewish schools sharing to a relatively insignificant extent. Released or dismissed time, in most communities, would mean the invidious isolation of a handful of Jewish children amidst large numbers of their Protestant and Catholic schoolmates.* Reading the Bible would necessarily mean reading the "Christian" Bible, that is, the King James version, even if only Old Testament passages were read.† And so on. In every case, the "intrusion" of religion into public life, it is feared, would result in situations in which Jews would find themselves at some disadvantage—greater isolation, higher "visibility," an accentuation of minority status. Uneasy memories of past persecution and oppression are stirred up. The most elementary defensive strategy would seem to dictate keeping religion out of public life at all costs; hence the passionate attachment of American Jews to the secularist-Protestant interpretation of the principle of separation of church and state. It is a question, however, whether defensive strategy is, after all, the highest wisdom of Jewish existence and survival.

ANOTHER factor in the situation must be mentioned, as it applies to both Protestants and Jews. It is perhaps best formulated in the brilliant *mot* of Peter Viereck: *"Catholic-baiting is the anti-Semitism of the liberals."* How true this is anyone can see by scanning the week's supply of "liberal" literature. For some such "liberals," Catholic-baiting is a clever device of anti-anti-Communism. Of course, Communism is a menace, they tell us, *but*—the "of course-*but*" sequence is characteristic—*but* there is "also" the Vatican, the "center of world reaction." To many more, anti-Catholicism is simply a syllogism of liberal logic, hallowed by decades of liberal tradition; after all, didn't the Pope "endorse" fascism, and isn't McCarthy a Catholic? It matters little that the facts are quite otherwise, that the Catholic labor and social program in America, for example, is as advanced as anything the country can show; that the Catholic Church is one of the most important forces fighting Communist totalitarianism on a world scale; and that the attempt to equate the two as like perils to American democracy on the ground that both alike are authoritarian systems is dangerous nonsense and could lead to disaster, should it ever come to influence national policy. Stereotyped "liberal" slogans seem far more appealing than the most obvious facts can ever be, especially when they permit one to work off one's fears, prejudices, and aggressions in an approved fashion. How else account for the great popularity of Mr. Blanshard's extremist *Communism, Democracy, and Catholic Power*, among so many "liberal" Jews and Protestants?

And so, through a combination of historical memories and fears, the negativism of minority-group defensiveness, and the insidious operations of the "liberal" equivalent of anti-Semitism, it has come about that Jewish intervention in the current controversies over church and state has only too often tended to strengthen the forces of secularism and to intensify the friction between Catholics and Protestants. Here we would do well to heed Rabbi Bernstein: "Do not take any satisfaction from the current Catholic-Protestant frictions. . . . A poisoned atmosphere of divisiveness and distrust will engulf us." (*Time*, May 5, 1952.)

III

THE interests of religion, of democracy, and of sound community relations without which American democracy cannot survive, demand a rethinking of the whole situation. America is predominantly a land

*It has even been contended that religious instruction in public schools might be psychologically harmful to children of minority groups. However, Dr. Samuel H. Flowerman of Teachers College, Columbia, reporting on the results of a detailed study to a conference on religion in public education arranged by the Reform rabbinical association, stated that "he believed the effects were not harmful except when parents passed on an anxiety about it to their children."

†Thus it is that the People of the Book so often find themselves in the false position of appearing to be "against the Bible."

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of minorities; that is its uniqueness, its strength, but to a degree also its weakness. Some way must be found in which these minorities within the national community may each freely pursue its own particular concerns without impairing the over-all unity of American life. Because American minorities—and in a real sense, the Protestants too constitute a minority, as well as Catholics and Jews—are many of them religious in character, or at least religiously tinged, the problem immediately becomes one of the relation of church and state. It is in this area that we need our most serious and creative rethinking.

On the basis of my own observation, and the many discussions I have had with men and women of all creeds directly involved in the interfaith situation, I may perhaps venture some suggestions.

American Catholics must come to realize the deep suspicion with which their every move is regarded by a large segment of the American people, and admit, at least to themselves, that there is considerable historical justification for such suspicion. They should complete and clarify the reorientation on matters of church and state that is currently under way in authoritative Catholic circles in this country and is reflected in the sharp rebuke recently administered by American Jesuits to Cardinal Segura of Seville on the occasion of the latter's attack on religious freedom. There *is* a new Catholic attitude, and it would be well if the public knew more about it. The Catholic Church in America would also be well advised to moderate its demands in the field of education, to curb exhibitions of ecclesiastical power in politics, and in general to do what it can to avoid inflaming the non-Catholic mind, today in an extremely nervous state.

American Protestants should make a fresh effort to overcome the defensive psychology that seems to dominate them. Such negativism is good neither for them nor for the country as a whole. They should cease making Rome the inverse criterion of everything they think or do, and above all they should rid themselves of the defeatism that has led them to surrender large areas of public life, including education in and out of the public school, to secularism. Surely Protestantism has more to offer than an intransigent determination to prevent Catholic parochial school children from using public buses.

American Jews, even more than Protestants, must rid themselves of the narrow and crippling minority-group defensiveness. Just because Jews in this country occupy such a curious "third" position between Protestants and Catholics, their responsibilities are great. We must rethink the problem of church and state, of religion and life, as it affects the Jew and as it affects the entire nation. We must be ready to abandon ancient fears and prejudices if they no longer conform to reality, and we must be ready to strike out boldly in new directions required by the times. There is no need for—indeed there is every need to abandon—the anxious search for injuries and grievances which has characterized so much of the Jewish "defense" psychology. On the question of aid to religious schools, I do not believe we have much to fear from any of the proposals thus far suggested. On the question of teaching religion in the public schools, I have yet to see a plan that seems to me wise or practicable, and perhaps there is none. But these questions will continue to be raised by many citizens seriously concerned with the problem, and we owe it to ourselves and to them to give fair and sober thought and discussion to their point of view, without attempting to throw it out of court in advance. Should not our community leadership more openly reflect the genuine religious interest of Jews and their concern over the religio-ethical education of their children, which has always been strong, however confused by the felt pressures and demands (often misunderstood) of the new American environment—a concern that every observer reports at high and rising tide in the present decade? That the question of public and private schools, and of church and state in education, can be discussed from the Jewish point of view in a sober, constructive, unprejudiced manner may be seen from Hayim Greenberg's exploratory article last year in the *Yiddisher Kemfer*. We urgently need more of such thinking.

Finally all of us, Catholics, Protestants, Jews, and secularists too, must realize the seriousness of the present tensions and our responsibility to do everything in our power

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to allay them, certainly not to exacerbate them.

Milton Konvitz is one of our best-known champions of a more rigid interpretation of the principle of the separation of church and state; he probably would not agree with much of what I have said in this article. But I think all of us might take to heart his warning, published in *Congress Weekly* of March 3, 1952, about the dangers of religious controversy:

"Whatever strengthens this principle [of the separation between church and state] serves the interests of American democracy; but one ought to feel grave concern over the cost Americans are paying for the achievement of this value—for little by little, as the wall of separation between church and state is being built up, there goes up also a wall of separation between Catholic and Protestant. While one wall strengthens the structure of American democracy, the other wall creates prejudice, misunderstanding, suspicion, and even enmity—religious conflict which can ultimately poison the wellsprings of American democracy.

"The conflict, as one sees it developing slowly but surely before our eyes, bodes ill for our society. The situation is one that calls for heart-searching and the highest reaches of statesmanship. . . . Ways must be found to maintain the separation between church and state which would not intesify religious divisions. . . . Only statesmanship and charity will lead to the discovery of such ways."

THE GENTLE WEIGHT LIFTER

DAVID IGNATOW

EVERY man to his kind of welcome in the world,
some by lifting cement barrels, laboring.
He looks so stupid doing it, we say.
Why not a soft job, pushing a pencil
or racketeering: the numbers game?
As the pattern is rigged, he must
get love and honor lifting barrels.

It would be good to see a change,
but after caskets he cannot fool with intangibles.
He could with his muscular arm sweep them aside—
and snarl up the tiny lines
by which he can distinguish love.

He is fixed in his form, save a hand
reach from outside to pick him bodily up
and place him, still making the movements
that insure his love, amidst wonders
not yet devised.

DAVID IGNATOW's verse is familiar to COMMENTARY readers. Mr. Ignatow has published in many other periodicals, and is the author of several volumes of poetry.

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THE TOMB OF JETHRO

A Story

A. A. DAVIDSON

"WELL, anyway, that's what he claims," Pinchas said.

"But surely not of *all* the Druzes," I protested. "After all, most of them live in Syria, and there are many in the Lebanon as well."

"I don't know, but if you ask him—in fact, even if you don't—he tells you that he's the Sheikh of All the Druzes. It could be. He looks the part. You haven't forgotten his present, have you?"

I patted my pocket.

"No, it's here all right . . . but you don't really think, do you, that for a packet of toffee he's going to reveal the Secret of the Druze religion?"

"Ah, the Secret of the Druze religion . . . I'll tell you. . . ."

I waited, looking out of the unglazed window of the truck at the mountainous country through which we were passing. High, very high up, off in the distance, Safed perched like an eagle on its mountain top.

". . . the Secret of the Druze religion, *I* think . . . is that there *is* no Secret."

"The sanctuary is empty, so to speak? and always was?"

"Something like that. Or—if there ever was anything, they've forgotten it long ago. The people—the lay people, that is—all they know is, once a year or so, they come and kiss the veil in the temple—which they call the Tomb of Jethro. They can't tell you any more, because they don't know, and—not knowing—they don't like to be asked. And the Sheikhs and Kawasses . . . on that point I'm not sure. I think perhaps it may be like the Emperor's new clothes, only it's gone on too long for them to admit to the nakedness. . . ."

"You get along well with them, do you?"

"Oh yes, fine. No trouble. We have a perfect understanding about water and grazing, and during the season they come and gather our olives and *sabras* on a share-crop basis. We can't spare the men or the time for that. And I think that they appreciate the fact we are a religious community."

The buildings were almost disappointing in their smallness and lack of any distinction, and might have been any country mosque or sheikh's tomb. For that matter, there is hardly an ecclesiastical building of any kind in the Holy Land which can lay claim to much beauty or distinction—certainly not the cement-slab and peeling-plaster synagogues of the coastal plain. It did not matter. One does not think of the Druzes in connection with architecture, anyway. The Baha'is at Haifa have at least their garden, with its rather insipid prettiness. There is a colony of Samaritans in Jaffa, a tiny branch of a tiny nation; but their holy hill of Gerizim is over in Jordan, and so is their annual offering of paschal lambs. The Karaites near Ramleh have only their rather grimy history of opposition to the "rabbinic" Jews, and nothing else, not even a Sefer Torah. And the Circassians, in their three or four northern villages, having lost their original language, cherish fading memories of ancient conflicts with the czars; cherish their horses and—presumably—the famous beauty of their womenfolk, who may still be seen at

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A BELIEVER in life on the land and "a convert to what is generally called Orthodox Judaism," A. A. DAVIDSON spent several years in Israel engaged in animal husbandry. Earlier sketches of life in Israel by Mr. Davidson appeared in our issues of December 1950 and June 1952. Mr. Davidson was born in Yonkers, New York, and attended New York University and Yeshiva University.

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times, with blond tresses and painted lips and cheeks, rows of golden sovereigns sewn onto their kerchiefs, swathed from chin to toe in gaudy, Gypsy-like clothes, standing in the bus queues in Haifa, sucking ices.

The Druzes have their Tomb.

QUITE a number of people were gathered outside and camped around it, and the good smell of wood smoke came to us as we got out.

"This is nothing," Pinchas said. "Wait till tomorrow."

The Druzes and I looked at one another with an equal shyness. They might have been, I thought, the original "dark and handsome" men whose foreshadowings used to be found in crystal balls by the Romany people before they went in for phrenology and relief checks. The Druze war record —the "War of Liberation" I mean—is a rather equivocal one. At the very beginning of hostilities the Israeli Druzes fought on the side of the Arabs, whose language they speak and whose culture they largely share. However, they experienced a great change of heart after the capture of Acre by the Jews. The Sheikhs and Kawasses reproved the people for their haste, and reminded them that the Moslems had martyred Druze leaders as recently as six hundred years ago. Obviously a mistake had been made, but it was soon corrected, and the Druzes received Israeli army badges to wear upon their *keffiyahs*. They fought the rest of the war on the winning side.

Some of them came over to greet "Binchas" and to lead us to the notables, who were holding a pre-convention caucus in the house of the Guardian of the Tomb. Some of the Guardian's milch goats were milling around in front, with cloth bags tied up around their teats to prevent the kids from taking tithes. An old man leaning upon a staff muttered something as we went past, his milky eyes evidence that the curse of Sodom still lay heavily upon the people of the land.

The room's walls were tinted blue and ornamented with an illuminated sheet of Arabic script surrounding a peacock, and an old calender advertising Eno's Fruit Salts. In a niche in the wall was a bundle of leeks and a photograph of President Weizmann. I thought these adornments represented a nice balance of powers. Meanwhile, Pinchas was exchanging compliments (I suppose) with a group of dignitaries seated to one side, and then he introduced me. The Sheikh of All the Druzes, or pretender to the title, looked everything that a Sheikh ought to be. He had a white beard, a white turban, long white robe and soft white trousers, white socks, and a black-and-white-striped waistcoat. A white silk umbrella rested beside him.

"Tov, tov," he said; and, *"Ani-sheikh shel kol ha-Druzim."*

I said, *"Tov, tov."* ("Good, good.")

"Kol ha-Druzim," (*"all* the Druzes") he emphasized. I really wondered if he had not got a rival somewhere. Accept no substitutes, his tone seemed to say. A thin person with a black velvet fez and gray chin whiskers, seated nearby, was introduced as the head man of a Temanee village not far off. In Hebrew which we are told is exceeedingly pure, and which I find exceedingly difficult, he explained to me, *sotto voce,* that he was not sure if one was permitted to visit non-Jews on the occasion of their possibly idolatrous Feast, but—for the sake of the ways of peace—he had come to greet his neighbors the day before the main Feast. The Druzes, he said, were very bad people, but one had to be on good terms with one's neighbors.

"Pay attention," Pinchas interrupted. "The old man is saying how much they love the Jews. They love the Jews *very* much, he says. They are very lucky that they have Jewish neighbors. If, for example, a cow from a Jewish village gets into their fields and eats the maize"—the Temanee cleared his throat huskily and looked at the ceiling —"they are not angry, because they love the Jews very much."

"And we love the Druzes," said the Temanee. "Very much."

The two men embraced and rubbed cheeks, muttering endearments in Arabic.

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Then they withdrew and the Temanee looked at me with black, burning eyes as the Sheikh continued speaking.

Pinchas continued: "He is explaining to you about the Tomb. . . . The Druzes originally followed Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses, he says. (Jethro was the priest of Midian, you know, and there is a place not far from here with a name that vaguely resembles Midian.) Anyway, Jethro was the founder of the Druze religion and this is his Tomb and every year the Druzes come to visit it . . . now give him the toffee."

THE toffee was a great success. Coffee was served in the usual tiny cups, the Druzes talked among themselves, and Pinchas and I kept up a desultory conversation about them.

". . . and it is *said* that if they die in battle they are immediately reborn as a Druze in China; why China, I don't know, but they believe that there are many Druzes in China."

"Well, I never heard of any when I was there."

"You've been in China? I must tell him. This should be interesting." He leaned over. The Druzes politely awaited his remarks. I was disappointed in their reaction: they took the news quite calmly, and asked, as they might after my aunt's health, if I had known many Druzes in China. Far be it from me to tell a Druze that China has no Druzes. I said that I had known a Druze in China.

"And what does he do, this Druze?"—*via* Pinchas.

"What do you mean, what does he do?"

"Does he grow tobacco, or has he olive trees, or what?"

"He has olive trees."

"How many?"

"Many."

"Fifty dunams? A hundred dunams?"

"Two hundred dunams."

At this the conventicle showed genuine interest, and I was forced to plead ignorance of the technical details of the Chinese olive crop. There was more coffee, and there were dates and figs. ("This Druze of whom we have spoken, in China, has he many dunams in dates and figs, and are they as good as these?") Presently, I know not through what graceful Oriental circumlocutions, Pinchas made known that we were leaving.

Would we not care to see the Tomb of Jethro?

We would feel ourselves honored to see the Tomb of Jethro.

The building, as I have said, was small, and lit by dim, hanging oil lamps. The site of the presumable sarcophagus was covered with layers of velvet drapes, which the Guardian turned back for us to admire. One of them was embroidered with a very large, lopsided Star of David. Several minor Druzes who had been outside smoking came in, lifted a corner, bent and reverently kissed the covering, then dropped it negligently and went outside again and resumed their cigarettes.

The Sheikh and Kawasses bade us farewell with benevolent smiles, and for me there was a special word.

"When you are next in China, tell the Druze there, whom you know, that he should try to come to visit the Tomb."

"I will tell him when I see him."

"Because it is the Tomb of Jethro."

And that is all I know about the Druzes. There are very few secrets nowadays.

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THE AMERICANNESS OF AMERICAN LITERATURE

A British Demurrer to Van Wyck Brooks

F. R. LEAVIS

WHATEVER may be Mr. Van Wyck Brooks' distinctive mark in the contemporary American literary world, the five-volume work that comes to a close with *The Confident Years* seems to me to be in an essential respect very representative—representative, I mean, of a prevailing climate: while it is, to a portentous tune, inflationary in tendency, it at the same time shows an indifference to the real American achievement. The indifference must be judged to be unawareness, and if one asks how such unawareness could be preserved by a critic intent on exalting and magnifying an established American literature, the explanation is to be seen in the nature of the inflationary bent itself. An English observer, then, who (besides the impulse of protest that takes him when a major achievement in the common language is slighted—in fact, ignored) permits himself to feel a keen concern about the present and the future of American letters and has accepted an invitation to express that concern in an American journal, mustn't reflect too much that he is committed to a delicate task. (And after all, I can, by way of dismissing this worry, remind myself of the pleasure and relief I should feel if an American critic, with directness and force, would say about the English literary scene and the prospect for literature in England the things that need saying—the things that will never be said in the *Times Literary Supplement* or the *New Statesman and Nation*, or a BBC talk).

THE very contemporary spirit of Mr. Van Wyck Brooks' survey as a whole is given in the adjective of his concluding title, *The Confident Years*. The confidence asserting itself in the years covered by the volume (1885-1915)—confidence that an American literature was emerging—has, in this subsequent period, Mr. Brooks' own, been beyond question vindicated: here we have the implicit position (it is explicit enough too) from which Mr. Brooks writes. But while this confidence, as he rests upon it, is so patently a convinced assumption of ample grounds, standing undeniably there (so to speak) in the public world—too undeniably, in fact, to need demonstrating—its essential character is to be wholly without

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COMMENTARY welcomes to its pages F. R. LEAVIS, one among the few great literary critics of our time, and worthy continuator, in England, of the line of Dryden, Johnson, Coleridge, and Arnold. When Mr. Leavis points out what he sees as the main fallacy in Van Wyck Brooks' many-volumed story of the course of American writing since Revolutionary times—namely, the sharp distinction made between British and American literature—the English-speaking world of letters may well sit up and listen and revise some of its accepted ideas. Mr. Leavis was born in Cambridge, England, in 1895, and received his entire formal education there, first at Perse School, then at Emanuel College in the University, where he has, for a long time since, been a Fellow of Downing College. His teaching and his example have formed and inspired one of the most important groups among the newest generation of literary scholars and critics, both here and in England, and the immense influence of the very serious magazine he edits, *Scrutiny*, cannot be measured by its circulation. Mr. Leavis's latest collection of essays—and his seventh book—*The Common Pursuit*, has just appeared in this country under the imprint of George W. Stewart. The five volumes of Van Wyck Brooks' *The Makers and Finders: A History of the Writer in America*, published by Dutton, are as follows: *The Flowering of New England* (1936); *New England: Indian Summer* (1940); *The World of Washington Irving* (1944); *The Times of Melville and Whitman* (1947); *The Confident Years* (1952).

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definition. That is, it doesn't express itself in terms of any considered or considerable ideas of what a literature, or a significant work, might be; it is wholly unrelated to any such ideas—to anything that can properly be called a conception at all (for a positive conception must surely have an examinable content).

It was not of course a part of Mr. Brooks' scheme in planning his "history of the writer in America" (his own phrase) to maintain that kind of observance of critical standards —criteria of value and significance—which is proper in the history of a long-established literature, where (that is) we expect the field to be more or less strictly delimited in accordance with the conception of literature as a matter of memorable works. Nevertheless, it is impossible to judge that the enormous number of names of authors and titles of books appearing in Mr. Brooks' pages along with some kind of descriptive commentary finds anything remotely approaching justification in light thrown on the origin and growth of a literature. It is not easy, in fact, to suggest any account he can have given himself of his justifying conception, or to divine a critical purpose that was in view—unless the quasi-creative evocation of a rich American past comes under that head.

But the inflationary bent presents itself in overt and challenging forms, forms where the critical significance is clear; as, for instance, in the treatment of W. D. Howells. Mr. Brooks offers us Howells as an author of established major status; over and over again in *New England: Indian Summer* we read of Howells and Henry James, Henry James and Howells, coupled as no one *could* couple them to whom it was plain that, brought into the presence of James, a Howells just doesn't exist as a creative writer; there is nothing there for comparison. Howells, it seems to me, has even less substance than Trollope, and the classical standing of Trollope (there is the sumptuous edition that Oxford is bringing out, prepared and garnished with all the resources of scholarship) has always seemed to me one of the most betraying absurdities of British literary culture—I mean, conventional high culture as you find it reflected in the *Times Literary Supplement*, the *New Statesman and Nation*, and the *Listener*.

But for Mr. Brooks there is Henry James and there is W. D. Howells—magnitudes, one gathers, that are not at any rate too ridiculously assorted to be habitually brought together for comparison and contrast. Mr. Brooks, in fact, prefers Howells; or at least he approves of him, and disapproves of James: Howells qualifies as positively and unequivocally American, and James doesn't. Howells was a good American: his "scorn for all things European precluded any danger that Howells would follow the course of Henry James." Of course Mr. Brooks wouldn't accept the simple equivalence that a good American writer is a writer who is a good American, but all the same there is something that can only be called crude in his bias against James. And there is certainly something wrong about the preoccupation with Americanness that makes Howells more significantly American than James and more acclaimable as a glory of American literature.

One might at first be inclined to say that the informing idea in the preoccupation, the idea of what being American would—or could—amount to, is too simple and positive. But as one examines the idea in its working one becomes more inclined to say that it is, in itself, illusory, and, in its tendency, negative and nullifying. It is essentially not, in short, an idea that could give an account of itself, and its confidence turns out to be indistinguishable from that disability. To give an account of its tendency is to give an account of what it comes to: one had to note the significance for the American literary future of the blindness that it induces towards the great, the real, achievement of the past. What it portends, as far as it may prevail, is emptiness.

This may seem a severe account. But consider what Mr. Brooks does with *The Europeans*—an American classic, and a crucial one, the astonishingly original and per-

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fect early work of a great American genius. In it James achieves complete command of the thematic preoccupation that appears in *Roderick Hudson* (itself a much more remarkable novel, deserving a much higher valuation, than would seem to be commonly recognized). *The Europeans* gives us a consummate example, and (one would have said) a supremely clear one, of that drama of critical interplay between America and Europe, conceived as different civilizations (the differences compelling such poignant interest because of the closeness of the kinship), which figures so largely and so significantly in the Jamesian *oeuvre*. Mr. Brooks in *New England: Indian Summer* by way of clinching the observation, "All that was not European repelled and bored James," writes:

> Like the baroness in *The Europeans*, after a year in America, he felt the annoyance of a swimmer "who, nearing shore, to land, finds a smooth straight wall of rock" instead of a "clean firm beach." He could not scale this wall, and America was too big and vague. He felt that his only safety lay in flight.

Someone might perhaps be inclined to point out that Mr. Brooks here is dealing with the later James, and suggest that he intends a special felicity of irony in casting this James for the role of Eugenia, Baroness Münster of Silberstadt-Schreckenstein, the representative in *The Europeans* of that Europe which, in the drama of mutual criticism and appraisal, is ironically "placed" (for that the defeat of the Baroness records an unequivocal major score *against* Europe is beyond question). One can only reply that no reader of the book who has appreciated the significance of the passage that Mr. Brooks recalls could have recalled it in bringing Mr. Brooks' kind of criticism against James. No one who had appreciated the significance and consummateness of *The Europeans* could have had that kind of criticism to bring.

In fact, the inadequacy of Mr. Brooks' idea of how a novelist may qualify as truly American is inseparable from the inadequacy of his notion of what a novel may be and do. The following, from *New England: Indian Summer*, is wholly characteristic of the author:

> The influence of Hawthorne is marked in his stories, and perhaps if there had existed a great American realist to show the way for him and interpret the scene,—during his formative years,—James's whole career might have been different. As it was, he could make nothing of the country.

Howells was a "realist" (we gather); but he presumably was either not a great enough one, or too late. With Howells, James himself is bracketed as a realist, but we gather that *he* was not a sufficiently *American* realist. "In England," we are told, "Defoe was a realist, and even Jane Austen." It might be difficult to find a satisfactory definition of a term used in this way; but the negative and anesthetizing force of the operative criterion it represents is plain enough. Hawthorne was not a realist: the remarkable good fortune that America had to produce so original a creative genius so early will not, then, be celebrated by Mr. Brooks. There is no sign that he has any perception of what that genius consisted in, and it is fair to judge that he sees no reason to deplore the pressure of opinion that would have had Hawthorne turn himself into a kind of anticipatory W. D. Howells, dealing acclaimably with the contemporary surface of American life.

Mr. Brooks' implicit account of Hawthorne's influence on James is necessarily of a negative order. Hawthorne was not a great American realist, and therefore couldn't help James to become an acceptable and really American glory of American literature. When I referred above to *The Europeans* as a "crucial" classic, what I had in mind was the way in which the influence of Hawthorne appears in it. This first of James's fully achieved novels is wholly Jamesian; but it couldn't have been so but for Hawthorne. What James learned from his very different predecessor (the learning was of course a great creative feat) was how a profoundly reflective intelligence, one preoccupied with what lay beneath the surface

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of life and with the nature and prospects of the civilization into which it had been born, could deal with its preoccupations in prose fiction.

This creative relation was possible between these great original artists because the problem facing either was, for all the differences, the problem of an *American* writer. And when *The Europeans* appeared, or at any rate ten years (say) after *The Europeans*, by which time the proofs James had given of the range and fertility of his genius should have been found irresistible, *the* American writer might have been acclaimed; the idea (one would have thought) being now sufficiently defined and charged to become a most potent kind of fact. For Hawthorne and James were more in American history than merely two individual writers; their greatness and their difference, together with the significant relation between them, established the reality of an American literature: there it was, Cooper, Hawthorne, Melville, and James, undeniably (again, one would have thought) an American central tradition, American and not provincial, carrying with it the promise of a robust continuing life.

But if only, instead of Hawthorne, "there had existed a great American realist to show the way for him and interpret the scene . . . James's whole career might have been different." Mr. Brooks avowedly wishes that James's whole career *had* been different. The achievement, of course, did not find itself at all undeniable; it is not there, so to speak, for Mr. Brooks, who may take it as a justifying concession when one observes—it is a timely moment—that the promise was not fulfilled. But, instead of what James actually did for America, what, ignoring this, does Mr. Brooks think he ought to have done; or—with better luck "in his formative years"—might have done? Anticipated Dreiser or Frank Norris or Dos Passos?

"REALISM" might sound a positive enough prescription; but when one examines what Mr. Brooks' "realism" amounts to, all that one can confidently report is the negation in it. It means indifference to the Americanness—and that is, to the art—of Hawthorne and James. In fact, one is compelled to judge that where Mr. Brooks says "interpret the scene," "interpret" means nothing; it is an empty word. He has left no content for it. And if you exclude the kinds of interest and preoccupation in the working out of which Hawthorne and James, in their very different ways, became great American artists, no treatment of American life or the American scene, however complete its "realism," can tend otherwise than to an effect of emptiness—emptiness, that is, of significance and of the substance given by that.

The negativeness of Mr. Brooks' positive, the nullifying efficiency of his preoccupation with Americanness, comes out strikingly in the following passage from *The Confident Years:*

> In part, through his attacks on Dickens and Thackeray [Howells] had destroyed, in America, the ascendancy of the English Victorian novel, endeavoring to sever American fiction from the tradition of England and bring it into the main stream of the fiction of the world. This cause he assisted in the critical essays on French, Spanish, Russian and Norwegian authors. . . .

In the phrase describing the aims and achievement attributed to Howells we have, unmistakably, Mr. Brooks' own habit of mind. To be American is to be *not* English; in his preoccupation with the negative, he confuses, with disastrous effect, some utterly different things. There was the old "colonial feeling," carrying with it a "dependence on literary England" that certainly needed to be challenged. And Mr. Brooks tells us that "others besides Howells were spreading the idea that literature in the United States was by no means inevitably conditioned by English opinion." The most effective way of spreading that idea, and banishing the colonial feeling, would have been, surely, to spread the idea that, so far as fiction was concerned, Hawthorne and James had patently made the colonial feeling ridiculous. But that line Mr. Brooks himself, if, even

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with the advantage of the later perspective, he could be transported back in time, wouldn't be prepared to take.

He represents Howells as endeavoring to bring American fiction into the "main stream." But there was nothing more fitly to be called a main stream than that into which Hawthorne and James had actually brought it. The inability to see this is an inability to see their greatness as American writers. It goes with the ability not to recognize that "literary England" is not English literature, and that, in demonstrating his independence of "British traditions and standards,"* an American writer might be testifying in the most significant of ways to an essential relation between American literature and (in the narrower sense) English. That "tradition of England," that "ascendancy of the English Victorian novel" which got (and gets—is Mr. Brooks free of it?) in the way of a due recognition of the American achievement is as deplorable to the English critic as to the American—I mean, to the English critic who thinks it important that the *cis*-Atlantic part of the whole achievement in the common language should be duly recognized too.

I HAD better be quite explicit about what I have in mind. The "tradition of England" in the matter of the Victorian novel seems to me both absurd and pernicious because, inflationary as it is, it imposes a blindness to as great a chapter as literary history has to show. In the 19th century the strength—the poetic strength—of the English language went into prose fiction. I might properly have paired an essay† I wrote on the influence of Milton in reply to Mr. Eliot with one enforcing this observation. I will merely offer the proposition, which is perhaps sufficiently acceptable, that in Jane Austen, Hawthorne, Melville, George Eliot, Henry James, Conrad, and D. H. Lawrence we have the successors of Shakespeare. I will add that I am not, in this proposition, to be taken as saying, with extension to other writers, the kind of thing that is said about Jane Austen when she is compared to Shakespeare because of her power of creating characters. The same kind of thing is said about Scott; and the criteria I have in mind exclude Scott—to note which is a way of intimating their nature. They point to novels that, because of their organization and their kind of significance, it is critically profitable to think of as "dramatic poems": such novels are to be thought of, if organization and significance are to be understood, as grouping with Shakespeare's plays rather than with *Moll Flanders*, or *Tom Jones*, or *Tristram Shandy*, or the novel of manners. And in this line of fiction the actual influence of Shakespeare can, in different ways, be felt as a profound and decisive, if unmeasurable, presence.

I do not mean my list as exhaustive of the writers who might relevantly be adduced. (And, not irrelevantly, I do not like Mr. Brooks' bracketing of Dickens with Thackeray.) But I confine myself to those who present themselves as the great compelling instances when this judgment is being advanced, the justice of which seems to me so obvious: if depth, range, and subtlety in the presentment of human experience are the criteria, prose fiction in English between Jane Austen and D. H. Lawrence has a creative achievement to show that is unsurpassed—unsurpassed by any of the famous great phases or chapters of literary history.

I am not suggesting that there is any equal of Tolstoy among the novelists of the English language; it is the richness of the whole "chapter," the array in it of varied yet related great writers, that gives it its preeminence. And they *are* related, even if

*"Meanwhile, cosmopolitan influences were pouring into the mind of New York, where others besides Howells were spreading the idea that literature in the United States was by no means inevitably conditioned by English opinion. The Columbia professor Brander Matthews, a peppery defender of American speech, was one of a number of critics who shared what he described as his wholesale distrust of British traditions and standards" (*The Confident Years*).

†It is the first one in *The Common Pursuit*—I give the reference in order to make plain that in insisting on the relevance of that essay I am quite serious.

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nothing simple that includes them all can be said about the relatedness, except that they are all of the English language. To include the great American novelists is not in the least to deny that they *are* American, or that there is an American literature to which they belong. It is (let us say) to illustrate the obvious truth that an American illustrates whenever, without feeling at all the less American, he recognizes that the language of Hawthorne and Lincoln and Mark Twain is the language of Shakespeare—and that Shakespeare belongs no less to America than to England.

I FEEL a little embarrassed as I look back at these rhetorical truisms. But the complex reality the truisms point to is not the less important because it is complex. And Mr. Brooks, instead of studying the complexity (about which there is a great deal that a literary critic and historian might helpfully find to say), contemplates, with an optimistic and positive air, the idea of escaping from it. He judges Mencken to have gone too much to extremes in his anti-Anglo-Saxonism (see Chapter 25 of *The Confident Years*), but the Americanism that he produces with a palpably endorsing sympathy is not less a matter of negation and illusion. There is that idea that the true American tradition derives from the West, and that the really American literature must come—has come and will come—from those regions which are Western enough to have escaped from the Anglicizing dominance of New England and the East. He tells us that:

> Theodore Roosevelt looked to the country beyond the Alleghenies. . . . He felt that the more the West dominated the national life the better it would be "for all of us,"—a wish that was to be realized in literature within two decades.

The writers whom Mr. Brooks adduces* as justifying this last judgment do not seem to me to justify his estimate of the achievement and the promise, and we may profitably examine this idea of the "West"—test it for content, so to speak—by considering the really great American writer whom the West did produce, Mark Twain. He is unmistakably Western and frontier, and unquestionably very different from Hawthorne and James. But does the difference countenance in any way the spirit of that reliance on the West which Mr. Brooks records, and sees, apparently, no reason to criticize?

And here I have to say that *Huckleberry Finn* as I read it is a very different kind of work from that offered us by Mr. Brooks. I cannot help thinking that my *Huckleberry Finn* is the greater work, and my Mark Twain a greater artist. In *The Times of Melville and Whitman* we are told:

> He was the frontier story-teller, the great folk-writer of the American West, and he raised to a pitch unrivalled before him the art of oral story-telling and then succeeded in transferring its effects to paper.

Yes, but it won't do to suggest that the art of *Huckleberry Finn* is a naive art, or that there is anything naive or simple about the outlook of the author. And to the question, "Was it not the moral of *Huckleberry Finn* that all civilization is a hateful mistake?" . . . one can only answer that to come away from the book with *that* would be to have simplified it into something very different from the great work of art it is.

IT WASN'T Huck who wrote *Huckleberry Finn;* the mind that conceived *him* was mature, subtle, and sophisticated. Mark Twain had had very wide and varied ex-

*E.g.: "In his highly developed artistic sense [Hemingway] was the type of a generation that cared, all but uniquely, for the art of writing. . . . He shared this sense with several of the writers through the sheer weight of whose talents alone the supremacy in American letters would have passed to the West—the poets Sandburg, Eliot and Pound, the novelists Dreiser, Anderson, Lewis, Dos Passos, Steinbeck, Farrell and Scott Fitzgerald" (*The Confident Years*). I will only comment on the irresponsible and characteristic way in which Mr. Brooks makes Eliot a representative of the "West"—Eliot, who hardly goes to strengthen any suggested idea of it.

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perience of men and the world, and he was not only a shrewd observer; he observed out of a ripe wisdom. If he was tenderhearted, he had, when his genius was engaged, too firm a hold on reality to indulge any sentimental bent. And when Mr. Brooks, in *The Confident Years,* calls *Huckleberry Finn* "that paean to the inborn goodness of man, or the goodness of boys peculiarly as nature made them," and makes it a document that justifies the grouping of Mark Twain with Emerson and Whitman, one can only protest against a disastrous misrepresentation. There is nothing simple or simplifying about the moral outlook of *Huckleberry Finn.* The irony is sophisticated: faced with a (for him) inescapably complex situation, Mark Twain is intent on doing justice to the complexity. It might be said that the essential theme of the book, that which makes it a world classic, is the complexity of ethical valuation in any society that has a complex tradition. Mark Twain, that is, though so unmistakably and profoundly American, writes out of a full continuity with the European past.

One way of enforcing the truth of this account is to compare *Huckleberry Finn* with another book of Mark Twain's, one that I very much admire though Mr. Brooks dismisses it with contempt: *Pudd'nhead Wilson.* It is "about" murder and detection, just as *Huckleberry Finn* is "about" boys' adventures on the Mississippi; but it is an ironical masterpiece, and the irony is essentially that of *Huckleberry Finn*; the ethical preoccupation is the same. But in *Pudd'nhead Wilson,* Mark Twain, instead of making his conventions out of the frontiersman's art of story-telling as he knew it, adopts a style and a convention of sophisticated literary tradition, and handles them with the supreme skill of a writer perfectly at home in them. And when one goes back to *Huckleberry Finn* it should be plain that to have made out of a Western vernacular the instrument that Mark Twain made, and used for such purposes, required an author of the cultural background and intellectual sophistication necessary to the writing of a *Pudd'nhead Wilson.* There is no paradox in the putting of such an instrument to such a use. The society that formed Mark Twain, and is depicted by him in *Huckleberry Finn,* might have been "frontier," but it had kept a vigorous hold on its heritage of civilization.

The fact is, "frontier" and "West" in these uses tend to be insidious words: they suggest the dropping of an outworn heritage and (it is often implied) its replacement by something more distinctively American. There is no hint of contempt for, or oblivion of, the heritage in the society depicted in *Huckleberry Finn* and *Pudd'nhead Wilson,* though it may be provincial. But as the frontier moved west there was, we know, a dropping. A testimony to the loss, and an implicit commentary on the faith that the loss entailed the promise of a positive American culture, can be seen in what Mr. Brooks records of Hamlin Garland's disillusionment: ". . . and in time Garland's first resentment of Sinclair Lewis's *Main Street* 'softened' as he said, in the light of these glaring facts."

CLOSELY associated with the idea of the "West" is the idea of the "new interracial consciousness," destined to replace the older traditional American culture. A commentary on this idea is to be found in the pages of *The Confident Years* that deal with Ole Rolvaag, "who remained, while living in America, a Norwegian writer":

> He was obsessed with the thought of the loss which every immigrant underwent when he forfeited the cultural heritage of the old country; when, without becoming a part of the culture that surrounded him, he became a stranger to his own. He clung to the energizing spiritual memories, the collective aspirations which the old-world people were discarding in their new-world setting, constantly asking himself the question, what was to follow pioneering among all these races that were losing their traditions together? . . . When to compensate for all they lost their gains were material only, when the old loyalties vanished and the old traditions with them, would not this land become a spiritual wilderness, inhabited by shallow, drifting "cultural tramps"?

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These questions are put with a force that, even if in these admirable pages Mr. Brooks (as so often) is mainly quoting, he must, one feels, have appreciated. But he nowhere gives any sign of having glimpsed an answer —an answer in the spirit of the questions— or of having noticed that he hasn't. Dreiser, surely, represents what the "new interracial consciousness" comes to. I will not dwell on Mr. Brooks' apparent indulgence (I find it characteristic) towards the estimate of Dreiser as a great writer, comparable to "the great Europeans."

It is time to turn to the significance of Ezra Pound. Mr. Brooks, I think, reflects a generally held view when he speaks of Pound's "feeling for the European tradition as a whole." To me the significance of Pound is just this: that while he sees himself, and is widely accepted, as being what Mr. Brooks reports, actually he shows himself utterly unable to understand what the conditions were—what kind of things were the "culture" and the "tradition"—out of which European art and literature grew. "Really one DON'T need to know a language. One NEEDS, damn well needs, to know the few hundred words in the few really good poems that any language has in it." And, "The Greek populace was PAID to attend the great Greek tragedies, and darn well wouldn't have gone otherwise, or if there had been a cinema."

What goes with the ability to say and mean this kind of thing is the conception of Culture as something apart and aloof, forming a special consecrated realm, and having only external contacts with profane living. Pound's own art belongs essentially to this conception; his poetic is something cultivated apart, in that consecrated realm (which in some ways resembles a void), and it is applied externally to the interests—the didacticisms about Usury and so on—that supply him with his themes. And in the association (so characteristic) in Pound of a refinement of "art" with a habit of toughly unrefined vocabulary and attitude we have, I think, a representative significance: there is, as it were, a complementary relation between the given conception of Culture (which plays an interesting part in Mr. Brooks' work, and makes its most notable appearance, perhaps, in his astonishing exaltation of James Branch Cabell) on the one hand, and, on the other, the actual cultural conditions contemplated in a despondent way (despondency being of course not the only possible kind of response) by Rolvaag and the disillusioned Hamlin Garland.

I am not suggesting that all Americans who read Pound accept his view of himself (and after all, Pound is not without his cult in England). But he does, all the same, seem to me to represent something very significantly American—something in the conditions in which the American writer works. No other country could have produced a Pound; no other civilization could have produced so robust a talent that had so little sense of what a living cultural tradition is, so little sense of the organic. It was this I was thinking of when, on another occasion, I was moved to observe that Mr. T. S. Eliot himself, with his immensely greater gifts and finer intelligence, was after all a fellow countryman of Pound. The provocation was (though there are other grounds) Mr. Eliot's record in respect of D. H. Lawrence; not his disliking Lawrence and judging him adversely, but the nature and manner of the dislike, and the terms of the justification alleged; the blindness to such genius going with the ability to give *that* weight to an Irving Babbitt.

I do not make these points with any happy complacency. America could not have produced a Lawrence; but nor will England be able to produce another. The representative talent that England produced just as Lawrence died was W. H. Auden—who is now an American poet. One can say of Auden that only England could have produced *him*. There he is, unmistakably English upper middle class, English Public School, and Oxford; and yet, since the time when he "arrived," the point to make about him

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has always been that he belongs to "this American world." There is no paradox about his easy exchange of allegiance and habitat. The fact is, as the phrase just quoted recognizes, the conditions that Pound's case brings up for contemplation in a highly challenging way present themselves in some form—they, or something essentially akin—pretty generally. Auden was such a portent because of his easy and complete conquest of literary-intellectual England. Only in a "culture" in which the continuity with the past had failed, a "culture" that had in effect lost, with its finer tradition, the sense of what maturity and creative achievement are like, could Auden have been accepted, and remained accepted, as a major poet and an intellectual. He was acclaimed by the ethos, or state, that he expressed.

We are all, then, faced with the same problem. The difference between England and America is perhaps that in England it is easier, as yet, to hold on to the recognition that there *is* a problem. It seems to me in any case that *The Confident Years* should be an occasion for recalling that America *has* had a literature, distinctively and strongly American, and promising an American development, yet in full continuity with the common past.

GERMANY

SOL STEIN

I AM a non-believer in surgery's
Quick medicine.
The sewed-together wound, the stitch
In time, the surface scar, is something which
You will rarely find this invalid
Believing in.

My trust's in wounds which look like wounds,
Which pain
Because no real wound ever heals
But lurks beneath the skin and feels
Like an underground of coals prepared
To flame again.

I visited Berchtesgaden warily
To test
Myself, my pity, to see if anyone could know
Nothing, sky, sun, be blinded by the snow
While weekend Germans pilgrimed to
The eagle's nest.

To forgive is human. I saw the stoic Germans,
A land
Peopled by apologies, by kids pitching to a catcher in a game
Learned from friends, by farmers growing the same
Good hops they used to grow. Had I the courage to pat
The red-nailed hand?

SOL STEIN has published poetry and articles in a number of periodicals; this is his second poem in COMMENTARY.

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THE HIDALGOS OF BEVIS MARKS

Glories of England's Sephardim

MARK RAVEN

ON December 19, 1951, His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh paid a state visit to the Bevis Marks Synagogue of the Sephardi ("Spanish and Portuguese") Jews of London, to take part in the glittering yet reverent celebration of the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of its opening. In external form, nothing in the synagogue had changed over these two hundred and fifty years. The great hanging candelabra and sconces of polished brass still held innumerable real candles, throwing their warm glow on the paneling and latticework of another age. The ministers, in their 18th-century top hats, recited the prayers in the strangely nasal accent and the half-Oriental chant handed down to them in a strictly maintained tradition. The congregants still bore many of the same family names—de Mesquita, da Costa, Pinto, Casseres, Mocatta, Carvalho, etc.—common not only when the "new" synagogue was opened in 1701, but when the community had been originally founded in 1663, and indeed even a century earlier, in some cases, when Marrano Jews from Portugal, forced to conceal their religion, had visited England from time to time or lived there, with more or less tacit recognition of their true faith.

Certainly there is a marvelous indestructibility about the London Sephardi community. An empire has risen and grown old; man's faith and habits in the outer world have felt many shocks and changes; but here nothing has changed. The royal family still gives the community the gracious patronage of an official visit, as Princess Anne (who later became Queen Anne) did in 1685. The leading families of the synagogue are still among the brokers and merchants of the City, with business connections all over the world. Jealous of its tradition, the community still looks up to the Mahamad (board of five executive officers) and the *velhos* (elders) to conduct the affairs of the synagogue with strict adherence to the *ascamot* (laws). The same charities for the poorer Sephardim of London still preoccupy the members: the Honen Dalim, Menahem Abelim, Hebrat Yetomot, Hebrat Moalim (succoring the poor, comforting the mourners, society for female orphans, society for circumcisers) still exist. And the same community which once collected funds regularly for *cautivos* (Sephardim in the Middle East captured by pirates and held for ransom) and *terra santa* (the needs of Jews in the Holy Land under the Turks) now does the same work by raising money to give to the State of Israel for the rehabilitation and training of Sephardi immigrants.

Is it that nothing has changed, or perhaps that everything has changed—the Sephardim with it, so that they are less a dusty bypath of history, carefully preserved from modern traffic, than a recognizable part of the main route, constantly made over as the years go by? It might be tempting, sometimes, to think of this community as a strangely exotic flower imported from abroad and kept alive by the English climate of tolerance. But this does little justice to the interplay of history between England and the community, so interestingly told in a new book by Albert Hyamson. One is reminded, reading it, how wrong it is

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FOR more than three centuries the Sephardic Jewish community of England has added its accent of color, tradition, and a certain aristocratic dignity—sometimes a bit stuffy, some say—to the British scene. MARK RAVEN, drawing upon Albert M. Hyamson's recently published *The Sephardim of England* (British Book Centre, 468 pp., $7.50), offers here a description and appreciation of this exotic yet quite British strain in English society and culture. Mark Raven is the pen name of an English writer now residing in the United States, who has been a frequent contributor to COMMENTARY. His most recent article in our pages was "Any Tears for Tisha B'av?" (August 1951).

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to think of the English tradition as overwhelmingly Anglo-Saxon in its inspiration. Nothing could be more "alien" than the Sephardi group, so proud of its foreign names and its outlandish—almost Spanish—respect for an inflexible code. Yet nothing at the same time could be more English. Indeed, the injection by this group of something "alien" into the stream of English life for nearly three hundred years is part of the process which has produced the English character.

Though the Sephardim came to England at different times and from different places, they were always conscious of an adherence to a separate physical group as much as to a religious sect. It was their family connections in many countries that had made them useful as "intelligencers" to Queen Elizabeth and her ministers in 16th-century England. The few Marranos left had been expelled in 1609, but within twenty years the immigration had begun again, considerably before the open readmission of the Jews to England. With England's trade position in the world growing, Jewish families, skilled in international trade, began to settle in London, coming from the Canary Islands, the West Indies, Amsterdam, and Portugal itself; and a Jewish community of "Portuguese" origin was openly recognized by 1656. Pepys' visit to their synagogue in 1663 is not the only visit recorded.

These early settlers were men of means—merchants, financiers, and doctors, for the most part—and their family pride was as strong as their devotion to the Judaism that, in earlier years, they had had to conceal. They were rigidly Orthodox, but even then there was some movement in and out of the community. Sir Augustin Coronel, who had suggested the profitable and momentous marriage of King Charles II to Catherine of Braganza, was baptized before receiving as his reward the honor of knighthood. Later in life, having lost his wealth, he returned to Judaism and was supported by his relatives, the Mendes and da Costa families.

The early settlers, linked with Portugal, were reinforced by a considerable immigration of Sephardim from Holland after the accession to the English throne of William of Orange and Mary in 1688. In the early 18th century, Italy provided a new source, some Sephardi families coming from Venice (including the d'Israeli and Treves families), some from Leghorn (including the Montefiores). Another source of Sephardi immigration during that century, especially towards the end, was North Africa, the immigrants to Britain coming by way of Britain's new outpost, Gibraltar. They were often looked down on at first as *Berberiscos* (almost as bad as *Tudescos*, i.e. German Jews), but they produced many names later to be known—Bensusan, Sarfaty, Nahon, to mention a few.

The Sephardim were already a recognizable element in British life, almost as distinct from their Ashkenazi co-religionists as from the non-Jewish world around them. They made their special contribution to England, as the years went by, both by persisting and by disappearing. In their "persistent" role, with their distinctive names and dignified—some might say snobbish—bearing, they went about their business devoutly, solidly, and tenaciously, while presenting a picture often attractive to Englishmen, that of the well-born foreigner who is deeply identified with England and who has an additional charm because he is never quite the same as an Englishman. In their "disappearing" role, they wove themselves into the English tradition by a process of intermarriage so involved as to suggest that half the British aristocracy has some "Jewish blood" somewhere in its history. Intermarriage is not an unusual phenomenon in Jewish history. The distinctive thing about this intermarriage was that where one group, immensely conscious of its genealogy, married into another proud group, the mingling of streams can be observed over a long distance.

It is the story of the families that stayed loyal to the synagogue that is mostly told in Mr. Hyamson's book, though the reader is invited to enjoy plenty of genealogical asides. It is interesting, for example, to see how a name like Moses Baruch Lousada, owned by a member of the Mahamad in 1663, turns up repeatedly in Anglo-Jewish history, either as held by one branch of Lousadas that remained within the Jewish community and are still active in it, or in

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the ennobled form of Duke de Losada y Lousada, a title conferred on a member of the family by the King of Naples in 1759, or in the form of Barrow (Baruch), some Barrows remaining Jewish for a long time, others becoming non-Jews, including a whole dynasty of British generals.

There are plenty of similar, even more "glamorous," examples. Among the descendants of Sampson Gideon, a leading financier of the 18th century, were the Irish patriot Robert Erskine Childers, the present Lord Auckland, and a former Duchess of Norfolk. One branch of the famed Mendes family produced the non-Jewish military family of Head, Sir George Head being Commissary-General, and Sir Francis Head, Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada. The Mendes and da Costa families united in the romantic figure of Kitty Villa Real, whose daughter married Viscount Galway, an ancestor of the Marquess of Crewe. As for the Treves family, which tradition relates to Rashi of Troyes, one member who left the faith—Pellegrin Treves—is the direct ancestor, says Mr. Hyamson, of "an appreciable section of the Roman Catholic aristocracy of England."

It is a familiar pattern to find the clumsiness or inflexibility of the synagogue leading to the first breach, with the departed member, having made his children Christians, turning back at the end to the shelter of his ancestral faith. Sampson Gideon, who saved the credit of the government during the rebellion of 1745 by putting at its disposal a vast sum of money subscribed by his fellow Jews, was a loyal if passive member of the synagogue under the name Rehuel Abudiente, but sent his resignation to the Mahamad when they used his name without his permission in a public statement on naturalization. In a long, furious—and notarized—letter, he wrote: "Your assuming a power of representing me in point of political or Civil Interest . . . is certainly as little consistent with prudence, as with the Law of Nature, or the law of the Land, and the more so as you knew the matter solicited for to be directly contrary to my declared Sentiments. . . . I hereby declare that I am not, nor will be from henceforth, any Member of your Society or Congregation, by whatever name you may have entered me or distinguished me therein. . . ." The resignation was duly recorded in the minutes of the Mahamad (which, incidentally, were kept in Portuguese until 1819); but when Gideon died, nine years after his resignation, it was found that he had bequeathed a thousand pounds to the synagogue and other legacies to the orphanage and Beth Holim Hospital, asking to be buried with his people.

Even more dramatic in its consequences was the resignation, equally unnecessary, of Isaac d'Israeli, father of Benjamin Disraeli. It had been laid down in the *ascamot* from the beginning that every *yahid* (member of the synagogue) was bound to accept any office in the community bestowed on him, and to pay a substantial fine if he refused. This, with other fines for synagogal offences, had become a considerable source of revenue. Isaac d'Israeli, a devoted book-lover who took no more active interest in the synagogue than he did in his father's business, was informed one day in 1813, to his surprise, that he had been elected *Parnas* (president). On declining the honor, he was told that the same laws under which he had been elected *Parnas* provided a fine of forty pounds for refusal to accept. He refused to pay, pointing out that he was quite unfitted for the office and deploring the legalistic approach of the Mahamad: "Even the Government of a small sect can only be safely conducted by enlightened principles. . . . But against all this you are perpetually pleading your existing laws. . . . It is of these obsolete laws that so many complain. They were adapted by fugitives to their particular situation. . . . You have laws to regulate what has ceased to exist. . . ."

Yet he hesitated to make a final breach, and even four years later he was willing to pay his *finta* (regular assessment) if they would stop pressing him for the fine. They refused, and he withdrew. For his children he finally decided on baptism, with the result that there was, in that event, no bar to his son entering Parliament in 1837 and rising to become Prime Minister. But Isaac never lost his attachment to his faith; in 1842, blind and with little strength, he left his house in the country to attend the inauguration of a new synagogue, founded by the "progressive" elements in both the Sephardi and Ashkenazi communities.

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The foundation of this new synagogue—the West London Synagogue of British (as distinct from Portuguese or German) Jews—was a climactic moment in the history of the Sephardim. The first law of their constitution had laid down in 1663 that no other Sephardi synagogue could be founded in the city of London, under penalty of *herem* (excommunication) for those attending it. As the residential area moved westward in London from the old city, the movement for a branch synagogue grew in strength, but the conservative elements in the Mahamad continued to resist the proposal, mainly, as they said, because "there is reason to apprehend that their contemplated establishment is to be on principles opposed to the received religious institutions and ordinances of our Nation, that it is not to be subject to ecclesiastical discipline in religious matters and that its promoters are engaged in alterations and abridgements of our established ritual. . . ."

The split was clearly doctrinal. The seceders—many descended from the earliest Sephardi settlers—were proposing a "reformed" Judaism, while holding, as all seceders do, that they were really only adapting the true spirit of the old tradition to meet modern needs. They went their way, along with Ashkenazi reformers, and were officially excommunicated by the Sephardi and Ashkenazi authorities. The joint rabbinical statement of excommunication said that persons "who do not believe in the Oral Law cannot be permitted to have any communion with an Israelite in any religious or sacred act." Sir Moses Montefiore, the redoubtable leader of the Sephardim and head of the Board of Jewish Deputies for nearly forty years, refused for some time even to allow members of the seceding synagogue to sit on the Board of Deputies and deal with lay problems of the Jewish community. But time healed the wounds, not by establishing some middle way—a futile procedure in theology—but by allowing the parent synagogue to see that it could still express itself fully, without the need to compromise. When it realized this, the parent became friends with its offspring.

With reformers peacefully out of the way, the old synagogue seems to have suffered little from any further theological controversies. Many of the old rigidities relaxed. Intermarriage between Sephardi and Ashkenazi had already been conceded, though earlier it had been heavily frowned on, and the mingling of the leading Jewish families in England became a common occurrence. The synagogue itself founded a "branch" in the west of London that became the center of the community, with the old-city synagogue of Bevis Marks little more than a showpiece. The services became increasingly orderly—an objective of the "reformers"—and tradition received another century of reinforcement. One wonders indeed, reading Mr. Hyamson's book, whether acute theology, in the form of argumentative conviction, did not disappear too completely. Have the English Sephardim become the antiquarian guardians, "all passion spent," of a beautiful relic?

Certainly one misses today the excitement that could be generated, as Mr. Hyamson records, in 1703, when the *Haham* (the leader of the community) was publicly attacked by a member of the synagogue for teaching pantheism in a sermon in which he had stated that "God and Nature are one." The attacker, Joseph Sarfaty, challenged the Mahamad to submit the case to any Jewish authority anywhere, and offered to pay one hundred pounds if he lost the decision. The members were split into two camps, and at one point the Mahamad had even to appeal to the attorney-general for a ruling as to whether they could on legal grounds refuse synagogal privileges to dissidents. In due course, the religious question was submitted to the Beth Din of Amsterdam, but the ruling was inconclusive. Finally it was put to the revered scholar Rabbi Zevi Ashkenazi of Altona, and a ruling was given in the *Haham*'s favor.

Passions burn equally fiercely today, but in different guise, so that a history of the contemporary synagogue becomes a social study, and only political questions, it seems, glow with the fervor of theology. Within these limits, the Sephardim of England may claim to be very much alive. They play a leading part in the institutions for Jewish education and study. They have become the central group for a revived World Federation of Sephardim. And in their synagogue, devotion and tradition combine to produce a service that has its own authenticity and beauty.

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FROM THE AMERICAN SCENE

RECREATIONAL ENTERPRISE ON THE BOWERY

Two Jewish Intellectuals Keep a Poolroom

SAMUEL S. COHEN

IN ONE of the "shops" I worked in at the start of the 90's I made a real friend, a boy named Brody, who had actually been born in America. For days I could not get over the wonder of this. Brody introduced Izzy, Jack, and me to many American institutions: baseball, the penny arcades, the uptown theaters where only English was to be heard on the stage, and swimming in the East River. He also taught us to play pool.

We never became very good at the game, but it furnished a few hours' pastime at the end of the week, after dinner, and before our various meetings started, and they always started hours late. On Friday nights when either Jack or I had any money we would go to the large poolroom in Irving Hall, a building on 14th Street and Irving Place where the progressive Tammanyites held forth. The hall had been opened originally by and for the "higher-type" Germans, who eventually had had to retreat uptown.

A Mr. Lemon, the Irish owner of this particular poolroom, after several years could hardly help being aware of our existence, even though we never became his most profitable customers. He would often point us out to other customers, within our hearing, and comment on our model behavior. For years we had been coming in, always sober, playing an hour or two, paying for our games, and leaving without ever arguing or creating any disturbance. No poolroom proprietor could ask for more than that. We began to feel like prized customers, and we were tremendously flattered whenever he referred to us as "the young gentlemen."

One day he took us aside and told us in a confidential tone, "You probably don't realize what a profitable business this is. There's a good deal of money to be earned here if you can make the investment. Would either of you young gentlemen be interested in opening up a poolroom?"

"We have no money," I told him quite simply. But this did not seem to faze him.

"Well, think about it—it might be worth your while."

"You want competition?" Jack asked.

"I was thinking about down on the Bowery," he told us. "With as many poolrooms as the Bowery has, it can accommodate another one very easily. And all of them will keep doing very well."

"We wouldn't know how to run a pool-

THE vicissitudes of Jewish immigrant life in New York City around the turn of the century were far more startling than is commonly suspected. SAMUEL S. COHEN tells here of but one episode of a chequered youth through which, apparently, he passed unscathed—how around 1897 he became the "supervisor of a recreational enterprise," as he was later to describe his period of poolroom proprietorship on an employment application blank. Mr. Cohen, who was born in Poland, is a brother of the late Morris Raphael Cohen, the eminent philosopher who taught for so many years at CCNY. He is now in his eighties. Not until he reached sixty was he able to satisfy his youthful ambition to see America west of the Hudson—and he hasn't returned from Southern California yet. The present sketch forms a chapter in a book of reminiscences of New York life in the 1880's and 1890's that Mr. Cohen is still working on.

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room," I told him, "even if we had the money."

"Don't worry so much. I'll become equal partners with you. And I'll teach you two young gentlemen the business and then you can run it yourselves. All both of you together need," he concluded nonchalantly, "is five hundred dollars, and I'll match it."

Although at the moment I had something like twenty cents to my name, I saw what looked like my one opportunity to get out of the clothing business, which I still despised as much as ever. I made up my mind to start saving regularly. I stopped fighting with bosses and stopped quitting jobs, and I became a steadier worker. But getting this amount of money together was still no quick or easy matter. Not only was my salary seldom over ten dollars a week, but there would be weeks when I was the only one working and bringing home money, and in addition it was hard to turn down requests for needy causes. But I tried to restrain myself, and to help me in that respect, I opened up my first bank account.

It took two years, and finally Jack and I had the necessary five hundred dollars, most of which was mine because Jack was more of a ladies' man and had trouble saving. As soon as Mr. Lemon found a suitable room to rent I quit my job, but Jack kept his and we planned for him to help out evenings and weekends. The room was a very long one, extending from Christie Street to the Bowery, with windows also in back on Chrystie Hall. It could hold fifteen pool tables, which Jack and I learned to our amazement were very expensive. Although we bought these on the installment plan it was still necessary to use the whole capital of a thousand dollars, which was about ten times more of an investment than a tailor needed to start a "shop" of his own, and with everything fully paid for, too.

We cleaned the place out, bought chairs, cues, balls, clothes-trees, whisk brooms, and spittoons, and had a sign painted with the name: *The Othello Poolroom, Props. S. Cohen and J. Rubenfeld.* Jack would have preferred another name but remembered that most of the investment was mine, and when Mr. Lemon came over to help us on opening night he pretended not to notice. In fact, he never did refer to our name.

Our grand opening was a huge success, and once started, our prosperity continued. We took in more money than we ever dreamed we could. I divided the profits with Mr. Lemon and paid Jack his share.

Of course it was very hard work and the hours were long. Although I didn't start at seven in the morning as I had done in the clothing factories, we kept open until one in the morning, and were open every day, even on Sundays. Jack and I worked on Saturdays for the first time in our lives, and holidays meant nothing. But I was so happy to be doing that well, and to have no boss over me—in fact, to be out of the clothing trade altogether, which was my one ambition in life—that I never minded having little time off. I did manage to attend a few theater matinées, but that was all. My family moved from our old Staunton Street apartment to a much finer one on Delancey Street, to become "fancy Delanceys," and although I had no opportunity to spend all the money I was earning, it gave me great pleasure to earn it.

After a few months Mr. Lemon announced that it was really he who had been the business brains behind the enterprise. He informed us that he would give us back the five-hundred-dollar investment, plus a hundred dollars' profit, we could keep the profits which had already been divided up, and we could drop out.

"Why did you want us in the first place?" Jack asked.

"Frankly," he confessed, after much hedging about, "I had enough money to open the poolroom by myself, but I never dreamed it would go over this big. I figured that with you two in it, I wouldn't have to risk the entire amount."

"We're staying," I told him, "and you can get out."

Mr. Lemon forgot for the moment that we were young gentlemen. "I'm the originator of this business and I'm going to stay in it. You're only poor, stinking tailors. You never made more than ten dollars a week in your life in the shops and here you made more than twenty-five. You should consider yourself lucky to get a hundred dollars' profit."

"I'll give you the hundred," I told him, "and you can get out."

"I'll give you two-fifty," he offered.

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"I can give you two-fifty," I replied, wondering where I'd get it, plus his original five hundred investment.

He finally offered us five hundred dollars' profit plus the five hundred investment, but now I kept still. "I can't offer you that," I admitted, "but I'm still not going to give up the business. What are you going to do about it?"

After many days of this we finally agreed to let an impartial body arbitrate the matter. We each picked one man, and these two men picked a third. They decided in Jack's and my favor: that we were to return Lemon's investment, plus two hundred and fifty dollars' profit, and he would get out.

This was obviously such a good business that Jack borrowed money from all his relatives, and some from me, and we paid Lemon off. Jack quit his job, for I needed his full-time help now.

Our most notable customer was B. T. ("Big Tim") Sullivan, the Tammany leader, and he was not above spending a lot of his time at our place. There wasn't a bar or poolroom, a theater or restaurant or brothel on the Bowery where he wasn't well known. He knew absolutely everyone's name and business and was ideally suited for the assignment Tammany had given him—to "take charge" below 14th Street and bring the Bowery into the Tammany machine. This he eventually did, and most successfully.

B. T. had been born in an East Side tenement. He knew lower New York and could converse equally well with the Irish and Jews and Italians. Every time he came to our place he made it a point to speak to every person in the hall whether he knew him or not. He would find out all he could about him, give him a sales talk on the glories of Tammany, then buy him a drink, or send him a bag of coal with Tammany's compliments, especially just before election time when he and his hustlers were after all our customers to vote half a dozen times.

Tammany was very briefly out of power during our poolroom days, when a reform mayor was voted into office. The boys didn't have as much money as they would have liked and they worked doubly hard to make friends. Even so, there was plenty of money for pool, liquor, and other vices during Election Week.

My father was still not having too much luck finding work and he lost no time in opening a cigar and soda water stand in a corner of the poolroom. He had never been in such a place before and he was at first quite bewildered by the looks and ways of our clientele. They did not much resemble the people he met in the clothing trade or in the synagogue, and there was seldom a Jewish face in the place except for Jack's and mine, and an occasional Socialist friend who dropped in to joke with us about the entrepreneur's future doom in the classless society.

Another celebrity was Jack Connor, a prominent gangster, and we had many prize fighters too, but whatever our patrons looked or sounded or acted like (and I had to remind Papa that he looked as queer to them as they did to him), they all smoked a good deal and drank considerable quantities of soda water when they didn't have enough to go next door for liquor, or when they were recovering from a hangover. Papa also fared very well, and he couldn't stop commenting on the habit the really big shots had of waving away their change. This was the closest he had ever come to finding gold on the streets in America.

My younger brother Morris was attending City College at this time and he helped Papa out after school and during weekends, for of course Papa never came in on *Shabbes*. Sometimes Morris helped me brush off the tables at night, but generally we didn't bother him, for it was more trouble to pry him away from a book than to do something ourselves. The customers used to tease him about his constant reading and they would apologize in the most elaborate manner for disturbing him in order to buy something.

Jack and I had never been good players, which poolroom owners traditionally are. Newcomers would come in, hang up their hats, and shout, "Owner!" Jack and I would look at each other weakly and take turns answering and playing a game. They generally did not call for us a second time.

Sometimes honest workingmen would come in to play after work, and we much preferred them, but we had no choice in the matter. For the most part our patrons

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were boxers, gamblers, politicians, and thieves. The Bowery poolrooms and saloons were the official hangouts of these gentry, certain groups congregating in certain ones. The saloons were even more notorious.

STEVE BRODIE's saloon was catty-corner from our poolroom, not far from the pawnshop of Isaac Meyer, who claimed that he was the one who had suggested that Brodie jump from the Brooklyn Bridge in order to become famous. He had indeed become so, and there was even a figure of him in one of our wax museums, but none of us on the block ever believed that he had actually made the jump. He would answer, when asked for a repeat performance, "I done it onct," and that expression became famous, too. But whether we believed him or not, we would still ask anyone about to take a big chance on something, "What are you trying to do, take a Steve Brodie?" Tourists came from all over just to be able to say they'd been in Brodie's saloon, and part of the success of the ventures on our block was due to his proximity.

But Jack and I liked to believe that we ourselves were partly responsible. Our place was clean, and that was unusual for a poolroom. We had a full-time janitor picking up after the customers all the time, for they threw tobacco wrappings, ashes and butts, racing sheets, gum, trash of all kinds everywhere except in the many trash baskets we had put out. Nor did they pay much attention to the cuspidors. The place was always so crowded it was almost impossible to clean up until after closing time, but as many times a day as the man could work his way into the crowd he would try to sweep or mop up.

One night after we'd gone home the poolroom was broken into and Papa's entire stock of merchandise stolen, even the soda water dispenser. This was a terrible calamity but the business warranted a reinvestment and Papa replenished the stock, although from then on never buying too much in advance. He also started carrying a small satchel home with him at night that he filled with the more valuable items, particularly cigarettes.

Gradually, an even rougher element than what we already had to contend with began drifting in to play pool or carouse around without playing. When they did play they would refuse to pay. The worst part of it was that we had to fight with some of them, either to quiet them down or get them out. Often good friends, they would battle with each other, throw billiard balls and break windows, then walk out, arm in arm, to the nearest saloon.

Being hardly the type for it, I managed to sidestep this pugilism as spryly as I had kept out of the way of the police on the strike lines, but Jack was a scrapper and was always walking around with one or both eyes blackened. We very soon hired a "bouncer," a former prize fighter named Johnson, without whose help we could not possibly have gone on. Johnson claimed to be related to a Lord Johnson in England who had deprived him of his inheritance and title, and he was always telling us how he was going to beat this man up once he'd saved enough money for passage. Fortunately for the lord, Johnson was always broke.

PREVIOUSLY I had been able to take a day off every once in a while just to stay in bed and rest, but now this became impossible. We worked every day, Saturday, Sunday, even on Yom Kippur, and Jack and I could not even spell each other occasionally, for running the hall required both of us, plus the bouncer, particularly at night when we couldn't have been busier than we were. Jack and I would try to anticipate fights and avert them by peaceful methods while Johnson, whose mere presence saved us considerable trouble, took over if one was already in progress. We had no cash register and all three of us collected cash, with Johnson turning over his to us when he felt like it.

Johnson was drunk a good deal of the time, and during one of his drunks he became involved in a loud argument with Jack. A man at the other end of the room wanted the balls set up on his table, and he knocked on the floor with his cue. To stop the quarrel I called, "Johnson, go spot the balls up."

Although he had been quarreling with Jack, he turned on me and announced that he was going to kill me. "That Jew son of a bitch," he growled, "isn't going to tell me what to do!" And he walked over to a table about four tables away from me, where there were fifteen billiard balls set up in a pyramid. Johnson had also been a crack baseball pitcher.

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"Sam, duck!" everybody yelled, and as Johnson threw every one of the fifteen balls at my head, I ducked fifteen times. He showed up for work as usual the next day and claimed he couldn't remember a thing. We didn't dare fire him or he really would have tried to kill us.

We had a select group of pickpockets and petty-larceny grafters hanging around all the time, and whenever one of them would get his hands on some money in whatever way —which was known as "making a hit"—he would come straight to the poolroom and call out, "Boys, we eat!"

They would all follow him out to Rankin's Restaurant across the street. It happened to be a very good restaurant, though many gangs congregated there, one of which was to cause us more than considerable concern because of "the Yiddish Napoleon," one of our customers.

HE WAS a very young-looking, short, dark boy, one of our few Jewish customers, and he did look like Napoleon, of whom he claimed to be an illegitimate descendant. He belonged to one of the gangs that frequented our place, and "the Yiddish Napoleon" was only one among his many nicknames.

One day he robbed a sailor of a good deal of money. Somehow, word spread to another poolroom, whose customers were not too friendly with those who patronized the Othello, and this rival gang delegated two of its members to visit our establishment. The two came in, walked right over to this boy, and one of them said to him, "You just picked my pocket."

The little fellow answered, "I picked your pocket? Why should I do such a thing? Look at the bunch of money I've got." He took a large roll of bills out of his pocket and showed it to them. The two tried to snatch it away from him, whereupon the other boys in the gang, in spite of the attempts of Jack, Johnson, and me to intervene, promptly grabbed the pair, beat them up, and threw them out.

I saw the two go across the street to Rankin's. Half an hour later they marched back across the street into our place, but this time with a dozen of their gang marching right behind them in single file. They walked right over to the cue rack, and, quick though they had to be about it, all managed to select the sixteen- and eighteen-ounce cues instead of the lighter ones. They broke these in half over their knees, holding on to the butts, which had lead bottoms, and then charged forward, swinging at anyone in their way. In a few seconds sides had been formed on each side of one of the tables, the invaders with the cues, the home team armed with billiard balls.

A while before, Jack had begun to carry a gun in his pocket regularly. Where he got the nerve I don't know, but now he took the pistol out and threatened to shoot the first one who struck a blow. Restraining those with the balls in their hands, he gave the outsiders a chance to back out into the street, which they did, taking the cue butts with them. We knew they would be lying in wait outside, and our boys ran into the street after them.

Jack and I immediately announced that the poolroom was closing, and as we hurriedly locked up and went out the back door through Chrystie Street we could hear the fight starting.

We were nervous for weeks afterward. We weren't the only ones who were afraid to come near the place, and for a while we had hardly any business. Some of those who had taken part in the fight were not yet able to walk around, much less play pool. A few were in jail. Nevertheless, before long we were as busy as we had ever been. However, Jack and I had appreciated the brief rest, fraught with tension though it was.

A GREAT deal of betting went on all the time, all kinds of policy and numbers rackets as well as bets on horses running at Sheepshead and Rockaway. The betting was heaviest of all for the Fitzsimmons-Corbett fight in Carson City, Nevada, in the spring of 1897. I was the only one who thought Fitzsimmons would win but unfortunately I did not put a bet down, for Jack and I never betted, drank, or smoked. We felt that the owners of the place at least should have sober habits, although it didn't seem that we set any example the customers wished to follow.

Theodore Roosevelt was police commissioner of New York City at this time. He had been appointed by the short-lived anti-Tammany reform administration, primarily to clean up lower Manhattan, put an end to the graft there, and weed out corruption

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among top-level police officials, Tammany men if possible. I did not know too much about this Republican in office over at Mulberry Street Police Station, but I felt well disposed towards him because I heard from my friends that he had ordered the police to be less brutal towards strikers.

A car stopped in front of the poolroom one day and several policemen in uniform got out, along with a man in civilian clothes. The policemen all waited on the sidewalk while the man, Roosevelt himself, walked into our place alone. After that I never doubted stories of his bravery.

In a loud, booming voice he asked to see the owner. He seemed quite surprised when I walked over to him, and he asked to see my father, but I assured him that I was really the owner. He immediately bellowed at me, "Your place is infested with nothing but thieves and panhandlers and robbers! I know about the betting that goes on, too! Some day I'm going to back in here with a wagon and pull you all in!"

I looked at him, shrugged my shoulders, and replied meekly, "There isn't anything I can do about it if you feel like it. I hire a bouncer, I call in police, and nothing helps."

He mumbled something I didn't understand and walked out. The only things he hadn't accused us of were peddling dope and running a house of assignation. I'm sure, though, that many of the pimps and dope fiends who came in to play pool conducted some preliminary business in our place and made contacts there. Negotiations of all kinds were constantly going on in corners. We had no control over the private affairs of our clientele, and probably many a robbery or murder was planned on our premises. All we knew was that none took place there.

We never heard from Roosevelt again. He did not pay us another visit, or close us out, and I understand that he cleaned up the rest of the city in a similar manner. Roosevelt and "reform" soon departed. Tammany elected the next mayor and went on with its graft.

All the police in the neighborhood were very kind to us and we never had to bribe anyone, gangsters or police, in order to remain in business or get "protection." Yet this was common practice at that time, particularly in the big saloons and wealthy houses of prostitution, and Roosevelt was supposed to put a stop to all that, too. I considered ours a prosperous business, but it seemed that others did not regard it as such, for we were never bothered.

THE element was now beginning to get really tough as more people drifted over from Chinatown—none of them Chinese themselves, however. We took it as long as we could, but one day more than a year after we'd opened, as we were locking up after a particularly hard day that I don't know how we got through, I said to Jack, "I don't know about you, Jack, but I can't take this life any longer."

"Not only can't I take it," Jack answered, "but I think we'd better get out if we want to go on living."

Money was still due on our pool tables. The mortgagee, a man named Walker, gave us back all the money we'd already paid on them, in return for which we left the tables where they were, together with all the other furnishings. Walker immediately sold the whole set-up to a man better fitted for the work, and able to move right in. All the new owner wanted changed was the name.

Jack and I took our leave without breaking down, but the boys seemed genuinely sorry to see us go. They had also become quite fond of Papa, who had accepted them in his philosophical way, although never ceasing to be shocked. On the last night our customers bought out his entire stock. I suppose they really had liked our management. We never took sides in any quarrel and we had always tried to be fair in our dealings with them. But the three of us were still glad to see the last of the place. We would have stayed on and continued to run it if it had been at all possible to do so, for we were not likely to come across such a gold mine in the children's-jacket trade, but we realistically accepted the fact that we had to give it up.

Jack and I, after turning over the keys, immediately started trying to figure out a way to avoid going back to the clothing industry. But first we took a much needed rest, and caught up on the theater. For several months we would not go anywhere near the Bowery. In time all our savings were gone, but the troubled memories of that year did not vanish so easily.

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CEDARS OF LEBANON

THE TREE THAT REACHES INTO BOTH WORLDS

Selections from the Zohar

One tradition relates—the time was at the turn of the 14th century in Spain—that, after the death of the Cabalist Moses ben Shemtob of Leon, two wealthy men called on his widow and asked to see the old manuscript which her husband claimed to have copied, and which later became known as the Book of Zohar. They offered her a large sum of money if she would show them the manuscript, but she insisted it was impossible, that her husband had written the book himself, and to enhance its value had ascribed it to the 2nd-century rabbi Simeon ben Yohai. However, other traditions assert that the Zohar (or portions of it) does indeed stem from ancient days. The controversy among scholars as to the age and authorship of the Zohar continues to this day.

The more skeptical one becomes as to the high antiquity of the book, the more difficult it is to explain the sacrosanct position it achieved in Jewish life and learning throughout all of Western Europe and the Orient. For, paradoxically, despite the charges of forgery that hovered about the manuscript even in the Middle Ages, and despite frequent rabbinic antagonism to its doctrines, the Zohar became a source of influence in Jewish religious life comparable in pervasive impact to the Bible and Talmud.

The name "Zohar" is derived from the verse in the Book of Daniel: "And they that are wise shall shine as the brightness [Zohar] of the firmament." For the most part the exposition takes the form of a midrash or exegesis of the weekly portions into which the Torah is divided. The book is enlarged by the insertion of smaller works which often differ from the main body in language and style. Some of the selections are in Hebrew, but most of the book is written in an Aramaic dialect which is itself a literary *tour de force,* for it seems to have been especially constructed for the Zohar.

The central figure of the Zohar is Rabbi Simeon ben Yohai, who strolls about the countryside of 2nd-century Palestine discussing the secrets of Torah with his disciples, his "Seven Eyes." Ben Yohai is described in his living person, yet the mystic dimensions of his personality cause him to transcend, during his life and afterwards, the boundaries between the earthly and spiritual worlds. He is likened unto a "tree that reaches into both worlds," and he is called a "holy lamp" who illuminates his followers by his wisdom, even after his death.

Some of those who read the "holy Zohar" did not penetrate into the precise meaning of the symbolism, or the philosophical thought which lies below the surface of the imagery. But something of the poetic expression and thought which touched them can be recognized in the passages offered below.

Implicit in the Zohar is the doctrine of the "Sefirot"—pictured as spiritual entities dynamically interlinked, and mediating between the intangible Source of Being and the world of our senses. These "Sefirot" make up the spiritual universe from which our world draws its sustenance, and they are presented in images that reflect realities better known to us. In order to effect a vital flow of sustenance and blessing from the highest spiritual spheres into the lower, more material world, there must be "unification." Not only a "unification" of the spiritual with the physical, but within the spiritual world itself a harmonious oneness must be achieved before it is ready to receive the vital blessings from the hidden source of all blessing, the Godhead. It is this "unification" within the spiritual spheres that is hinted at in the discussion of the yearning of the Community of Israel for its Holy Mate. The Community is not only the actual people, but its spiritual counterpart in the "upper worlds." It is in a sense a unity within the Divinity which is desired.

However—and here perhaps we can begin to apprehend why the generations found their lives enhanced under the influence of the Zohar—there can be no unity within the divine spheres before there is unity in the

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lower worlds. "The perfection of the upper worlds waits upon the perfection of the lower worlds. . . . Adam and Eve must be turned face to face before the upper union is perfected." The very functioning of the cosmos, even of God, is dependent, to some extent, on us, and life is invested with implications stretching far beyond the seen. These key ideas of the Zohar make themselves apparent even to the reader who is not familiar with the more technical background of the symbolism here presented. [Further exposition of the ideas of the Zohar may be found in the article "A Mystic Philosopher on East Broadway," page 421 of this issue.—ED.]

The selections given here are from the small reader put out by Schocken Books in 1949 under the title *Zohar: The Book of Splendor*, edited by Gershom G. Scholem.

—HERBERT WEINER.

A Seal Upon Thy Heart

ON A certain occasion, wishing to get away from the heat of the sun, Rabbi Eleazar and Rabbi Abba turned into a cave at Lydda. Rabbi Abba spoke: Let us now compass this cave about with words of the Torah. Rabbi Eleazar then began, quoting the verse: "Set me as a seal upon thy heart, as a seal upon thine arm . . . the flashes thereof are flashes of fire, a very flame of the Lord" [Cant. 8:6].

He said: This verse has provoked great discussion. One night I was in attendance on my father, and I heard him say that it is the souls of the righteous, they alone, which affect the true devotion of the Community of Israel to God, and her longing for him, for these souls make possible the flow of the lower waters toward the upper, and this brings about perfect friendship and the yearning for mutual embrace in order to bring forth fruit. When they cleave one to the other, then says the Community of Israel in the largeness of her affection: "Set me as a seal upon thy heart." For, as the imprint of the seal is to be discerned even after the seal is withdrawn, so I shall cling to you, even after I am taken from you and enter into captivity: thus says the Community of Israel.

Thus, "Set me as a seal upon thy heart," so that I may remain upon you in semblance, as the imprint of a seal.

"For love is strong as death" [*ibid.*], violent, as is the separation of the spirit from the body for we have learned that when a man is come to leave this world and he sees wondrous things, his spirit, like an oarless boatman tossing up and down and making no headway on the sea, also tosses up and down through his limbs, asking leave of each one; and only with great rending is its separation performed. Thus, violently, does the Community of Israel love God. "Jealousy is cruel as the grave" [*ibid.*]. Without jealousy, it is not true love. Thus we learn that for a man's love of his wife to be perfect, he should be jealous, for then he will not look after any other woman.

As they sat, they heard Rabbi Simeon approaching on the road, with Rabbi Judah and Rabbi Isaac. When Rabbi Simeon came to the cave, Rabbi Eleazar and Rabbi Abba emerged from it. Said Rabbi Simeon: From the wall of the cave I perceive that the Divine Presence hovers here. And they all sat down.

Rabbi Simeon asked: What have you been discoursing of?

Rabbi Abba replied: Of the love that the Community of Israel bears to God. And Rabbi Eleazar cited in that connection the words: "Set me as a seal upon thy heart."

Rabbi Simeon said: Eleazar, it was the celestial love and the ties of affection which you were in the act of perceiving. Then he remained silent for a time, and at last said: Always silence is agreeable, save where the Torah is concerned. I possess a jewel which I would share with you. It is a profound idea which I came upon in the book of Rav Hamnuna the Elder. It is this:

Always, it is the male who pursues the female seeking to stimulate her love, but in this case we see the female pursuing the male and paying court, a thing not ordinarily accounted fitting for the female. But in this there is a profound mystery, one of the most cherished treasures of the King. We know that three souls pertain to the divine grades. Nay, four, for there is one supernal soul which is unperceivable, certainly to the keeper of the lower treasury, and even to that of the upper. This is the soul of all souls, incognizable and inscrutable. All

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is contingent on it, which is veiled in a dazzling bright veil. From it are formed pearls which are tissued together like the joints of the body, and these it enters into, and through them manifests its energy. It and they are one, there being no division between them. Yet another, a female soul, is concealed amidst her hosts and has a body adhering to her through which she manifests her power, as the soul in the human body.

These souls are as copies of the hidden joints above. Yet another soul is there, namely, the souls of the righteous below, which, coming from the higher souls, the soul of the female and the soul of the male, are hence preeminent above all the heavenly hosts and camps. It may be wondered, if they are thus preeminent on both sides, why do they descend to this world only to be taken thence at some future time?

THIS may be explained by way of a simile: A king has a son whom he sends to a village to be educated until he shall have been initiated into the ways of the palace. When the king is informed that his son is now come to maturity, the king, out of his love, sends the matron his mother to bring him back into the palace, and there the king rejoices with him every day. In this wise, the Holy One, be blessed, possessed a son from the Matron, that is, the supernal holy soul. He despatched it to a village, that is, to this world, to be raised in it, and initiated into the ways of the King's palace. Informed that his son was now come to maturity, and should be returned to the palace, the King, out of love, sent the Matron for him to bring him into the palace. The soul does not leave this world until such time as the Matron has arrived to get her and bring her into the King's palace, where she abides forever. Withal, the village people weep for the departure of the king's son from among them. But one wise man said to them: Why do you weep? Was this not the King's son, whose true place is in his father's palace, and not with you?

If the righteous were only aware of this, they would be filled with joy when their time comes to leave this world. For does it not honor them greatly that the Matron comes down on their account, to take them into the King's palace, where the King may every day rejoice in them? For to God there is no joy save in the souls of the righteous. Only the souls of the righteous here on earth can stir the love of the Community of Israel for God, for they come from the King's side, the side of the male. This transport goes on to the female and excites her love, and thus does the male stir the love and fondness of the female, and the female is united with the male in love. In like manner the female's desire to pour forth lower waters to mingle with the upper waters is incited only through the souls of the righteous. And so, happy are the righteous in this world and the world to come, for on them the upper and lower beings are based. Hence it stands written: "The righteous is the foundation of the world" [Prov. 10:25].

Male and Female

RABBI SIMEON set out one time for Tiberias, and with him were Rabbi Yose, Rabbi Judah, and Rabbi Hiyya. On the road coming toward them they met Rabbi Phineas. All dismounted and sat down on the mountainside, under a tree. Rabbi Phineas spoke: While we sit, I should like to hear some of those wondrous ideas which figure in your discourse daily.

Then Rabbi Simeon spoke, commencing with the text, "And he went on his journeys from the South even to Beth-el, unto the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Beth-el and Ai" [Gen. 13:3]. He said: We might here have expected the word journey; but instead we read "journeys," which is intended to mean that on the journey with him was the Divine Presence. It behooves a man to be "male and female," always, so that his faith may remain stable, and in order that the Presence may never leave him. You will ask: How with the man who makes a journey, and, away from his wife, ceases to be "male and female"? Such a one, before starting, and while he still is "male and female," must pray to God, to draw unto himself the Presence of his Master. After he has prayed and offered thanksgiving, and when the Presence is resting on him, then he may go, for by virtue of his union with the Presence he is now male and female in the country, just as he was male and female in the town, for it is written: "Righteousness [*zedek*, fem-

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inine of *zaddik*] shall go before him and shall make his footsteps a way" [Ps. 85:14].

Remark this. The whole time of his traveling a man should heed well his actions, lest the holy union break off, and he be left imperfect, deprived of the union with the female. If it was needful when he and his wife were together, how much greater the need when the heavenly mate is with him? And the more so, indeed, since this heavenly union acts as his constant guard on his journey, until his return home. Moreover, it is his duty, once back home, to give his wife pleasure, inasmuch as she it was who obtained for him the heavenly union.

There is twofold reason for this duty of cohabitation. First, this pleasure is a religious one, giving joy also to the Divine Presence, and it is an instrument for peace in the world, as it stands written, "and thou shalt know that thy tent is in peace and thou shalt visit thy habitation and not sin" [Job 5:24]. (It may be questioned, is it a sin if he fails to go in to his wife? It is a sin, for in his failure he detracts from the honor of the heavenly mate who was given him by reason of his wife.) Secondly, if his wife should conceive, the heavenly partner bestows upon the child a holy soul; for this covenant is called the covenant of the Holy One, be blessed.

Hence, a man should be as zealous to enjoy this joy as to enjoy the joy of the Sabbath, at which time is consummated the union of the sages with their wives. Thus, "thou shalt know that thy tent is in peace," for the Presence accompanies you and sojourns in your house, and for this reason "thou shalt visit thy habitation and not sin," is gladly carrying out the religious duty to have conjugal intercourse before the Presence.

So it is that the students of Torah, away from their wives the six days of the week they engage in study, are in this period attached to a heavenly mate, so that they do not cease to be "male and female." And with the incoming of the Sabbath, it behooves them to rejoice their wives, to the honor of the heavenly union, and in seeking to do the will of their Master. . . .

In like wise, when a man's wife is in her days of separation, in those days while he waits for her the man has with him the heavenly mate, so that he continues to be "male and female." When the wife is purified, the man is in duty bound to rejoice her, in joyful fulfillment of a religious obligation.

According to secret doctrine, the mystics are bound to give their whole mind and purpose to the one [the Shekhinah]. It may be objected that in the light of the previous argument, a man is in a state of more honor on a journey than at home, by virtue of the heavenly mate who is then with him. This is not so. At home, the wife is the foundation of a man's house, inasmuch as it is by virtue of her that the Presence does not leave the house.

So the verse, "and Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent" [Gen. 24:67], our masters have interpreted to mean that the Divine Presence came to Isaac's house along with Rebecca. According to secret doctrine, the supernal Mother is together with the male only when the house is in readiness and at that time the male and female are conjoined and blessings are showered forth by the supernal Mother upon them.

Likewise, the lower Mother is found together with the male only when the house is in readiness, and the male goes in to the female and they conjoin together; then the blessings of the lower Mother are showered forth for them. Therefore, two females, his Mother and his wife, are to compass a man about in his house, like the Male above. There is reference to this in the verse "Unto [*ad*] the desire of the everlasting hills" [Gen. 49:26]. This *ad* is the desired object of the "everlasting hills," by which is meant the supreme female, who is to make ready for him, and make him blissful and bless him, and also the lower female, who is to be joined in union with him and take support from him.

Likewise below, the desire of the "everlasting hills" is for the man when he is married, and two females, one of the upper, one of the lower world, are to give him bliss—the upper one in showering upon him all the blessings and the lower one in receiving support from him and being joined together with him. So it is with the man in his house. But when he is on a journey, while the supernal Mother is still with him, the lower wife remains behind and therefore on his returning, it behooves him to do that which will compass him about with two females.

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ON THE HORIZON

Only So Big?—A Puzzler

NATHAN ASCH

THE quotations below, listed by authors alphabetically, are the by-product of indiscriminate reading. I'm a compulsive reader, the way some people drink, or keep the radio turned on all day. For years now I have been noticing that authors of stories, articles, and books, when mentioning Jews, almost invariably describe them as *little*. Several of these authors are themselves Jews; among them are some of the greatest writers of our time, as well as writers of potboilers. Rereading a book I wrote more than twenty years ago, I found to my surprise I must include myself among them. The list does not contain all the *little Jew* mentions I came across. I became aware of the coincidence only gradually; sometimes I neglected noting it down, the reading being too exciting, or pencil and paper not handy.

SHERWOOD ANDERSON (*Memoirs*): "The man we had thus found was a little dark Russian Jew."

NATHAN ASCH (*Pay Day*): "A little guy in the corner read a Jewish newspaper."

MICHAIL ARTZYBASHEV (*Sanine*): "The little Jew was sitting alone on the steps of his house."

LEWIS BROWNE (*This Man Heine*): "In place of the familiar little Jewish teachers. . . ."

"A little Jew with a big beard. . . ."

"A stoutish little Jew with a stern pallid face. . . ."

"This pale, emaciated, nervous little Jew. . . ."

SUZANNE CHANTAL (*Dieu ne dort pas*): "*Quand on est un petit juif, on le reste.*"

"*Un petit emigrant juif, c'est ce que je suis.*"

RICHARD HARDING DAVIS ("The Card Sharp"): "There, at the end of the wharf—the little Jew in furs. . . ."

SAMUEL DICKSON (*San Francisco Is Your Home*): "The first outdoor Christmas tree was lighted at the command of the little London Jew."

JOHN DOS PASSOS (*USA*): "When little Mr. Feinstein from the office. . . ."

NORMAN DOUGLAS (*South Wind*): "Mr. Marten was a hirsute and impecunious young Hebrew."

"[Mr. Marten was] a slovenly little plebeian."

THEODORE DREISER (*A Traveler at Forty*): "This particular little Jew had a quizzical, screwed up expression on his face."

KARL ESKELUND (*My Danish Father*): "No, Lena was a little Jewish girl."

F. SCOTT FITZGERALD ("Mayday"): "Little Jew with long black whiskers. . . ."

DAVID FOOTMAN (*Red Prelude*): "Goldenberg, a little Ukrainian Jew. . . ."

PAUL GOODMAN (*The Break-up of Our Camp*): "A tiny Polish Jew, he. . . ."

DESPITE such notable public examples as Hank Greenberg, Bernard Baruch, and Maxie Rosenbloom, and the clearly observable fact that Jewish storekeepers outfit their families from the same size ranges as the cash customers, the common *image* of the Jew persistently resists reference to such plain realities. Why do people —not only his neighbors, but himself as well— see the Jew as only *so* tall? From years of reading in various literatures, NATHAN ASCH wryly documents this puzzler—but leaves it for us to speculate upon an answer. Mr. Asch has written for the *New Yorker*, *Yale Review*, and numerous other periodicals, and has published five books, both fiction and non-fiction. He was born in Warsaw in 1902, came to the United States in 1915, and attended Syracuse and Columbia Universities. For the record, he is 5 feet 10½ inches tall, and weighs 200 pounds.

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". . . about the little Jew in the crowded trolley-car. . . ."

NANCY HALE (*The Prodigal Women*): "In a corner cringed a little Jewish messenger."
"A small man . . . Mr. Levy. . . ."

HEINRICH HEINE (*The Poetry and Prose of Heinrich Heine*):
"[God] was gazing contentedly out of a little window of heaven, with his pious old face with its little Jewish beard."
"Your grandfather was a little Jew with a long beard."
" . . . *petit juif d'Amsterdam.*"

RUTH HUNTER (*Come Back on Tuesday*): "A nice little Jewish man, Mr. Leventhal, met us at the Hoboken Theatre."

HENRY KANE (*Report for a Corpse*): "My agent was small and round, all glasses and no hair. 'Moe,' I said. . . ."

JOHN KEROUAC (*The Town and the City*): "The motherly little intellectual girl he had met at college, Dora Zelnick."
"His poor little Jew's past. . . ."

GERALD KERSH ("The Conquistador Worm"): "He was a Jew, very small, closely wrapped in a wolf's skin."

SIDNEY KINGSLEY (*Detective Story*): "JOE FEINSON, police reporter, enters . . . tiny man . . . exaggerated nose."

ARTHUR KOESTLER (*Scum of the Earth*): " . . . little Polish Jew of 19. . . ."

JACK LAIT and LEE MORTIMER (*New York: Confidential*): " . . . a shabby little tailor who rushed up to the 'schul.' . . ."

ANDREA LATZKO ("A Duel by Candlelight"): "Rabbi Samuel Levi was a delicate little man."

D. H. LAWRENCE (as quoted in *Little Reviews, 1914-1943*): "We have a little Jew in the East End. . . ."
(*The Virgin and the Gypsy*): "'Ah, lovely, lovely,' cried the little Jewess."

A. J. LIEBLING ("Quest for Molly"): ". . . and a little Jewish tailor down in the neighborhood. . . ."

FEDERICO GARCIA LORCA ("El Rey de Harlem"): ". . . *las pequenas judías que tiemblan*—. . . ."

ROBERT LOWRY (*The Big Cage*): "So when little Suzy Farber, a tiny dark woman. . . ."
"Mr. Farber . . . comic-looking, plump little white-haired guy. . . ."

KLAUS MANN (*The Turning Point*): ". . . he seems just a sickly little Jew. . . ."

THOMAS MANN ("Little Lizzy"):"He was a little Jewish gentleman, with a serious face."

WALLACE MARKFIELD ("Ph.D."): ". . . he, Auerbach, little Jew of C.C.N.Y. . . ."

RICHARD MASON (*The Shadow in the Peak*): "He was . . . looking like a little Jewish tailor."

SOMERSET MAUGHAM (*Ashenden*): ". . . the little Jew. . . ."
("Straight Flush"): "Mr. Rosenbaum was a little hunched-up Jew. . . ."

MEZZ MEZZROW (*Really the Blues*): "His valet, a little East Side Jewish boy called Dinky. . . ."

HENRY MILLER (*Black Spring*): "If you were to pass him in the street, little Rubin, you would say, 'dirty little kike.' . . ."
"They were all midgets in the busheling room—Rubin, Rapp and Chaimowitz."

IRENE NEMIROVSKY (*The Ball*): "Her father, a spare little Jew with very bright eyes. . . ."

JOHN O'HARA (*Butterfield 8*): "Me, a little Hebe, from Hartford. . . ."
". . . a beautiful little Jewess. . . ."

DOROTHY PARKER ("Big Blonde"): "Sydney was a little brightly-dressed clever Jew."

DREW PEARSON (San Francisco *Chronicle*, March 18, 1950): ". . . Haym Solomon, the little Jewish patriot. . . ."

FRANKLIN PELL (from jacket of *Hangman's Hill*): ". . . and Tubby Cohn, genial little photographer with a genius for finding trouble. . . ."

PRUDENCIO DE PEREDA ("My Grandmother's Nose"): ". . . little Semite doctor came to see me."

BURTON RASCOE ("What Is Love?"): "A fat bald-headed little Jew sitting at an office desk."

ABRAHAM ROTHBERG ("The Booby Hatch"): "I got to know a little Jewish boy very well."

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FRANZ SCHOENBERNER (*Confessions of a European Intellectual*): ". . . little Jewish army captain named Dreyfus. . . ."

RUTH TARBAH (*Pulaski Place*): "Sam Schwartz . . . was a sharp-eyed, sandy-haired nervous little man. . . ."

GEORGE TABORI (*Companions of the Left Hand*): "'*Et alors,* my little Jewess,' he would mock me. . . ."

TIME (April 3, 1950): ". . . wispy-haired little Painter Chagall . . . left Russia and its harrowing threat of pogroms. . . ."

LAWRENCE TREAT (*Over the Edge*): ". . . me, a small, undersized little Jew. . . ."

VOGUE (March 1, 1950): "Noach Levinson, a sharp, little fellow in a brown suit. . . ."

EDWARD WEEKS (in a review of *The Wall*): "Noach Levinson, a prying...little scholar. . . ."

VIRGINIA WOOLF (*The Years*): "He was a clever little Jew-boy from Birmingham."

STEFAN ZWEIG (*The World of Yesterday*): "This blinded, fat little Jew, Lissauer, anticipated Hitler's example."

THE NEWS

HAROLD NORSE

TAKING home the Sunday papers, late
In the dawn under the stone
Looming of abandoned business structures,
Past the slumbering airport service, the all
Night cafeteria where stray
Bits of dangerous trade, like gulls, hang out
Waiting, with eyes that fish,

You turn the lock, return, enter the known
Milieu of your feelings, bound
By the furniture, by books, two fireplaces
And that fur bunny someone dear at Easter
Brought. It's spring; and the pages
Of the New York *Times* alternate
Between depressing and amusing

News. You hurry past wretched headlines
Of that bloody and interminable
Madness, war in the East, generals who bray
Their own particular neurosis into
The radar of the nerves:
The gardening page presents
A nineteenth-century sentiment, pretends

Escape through the familiar yard,
Blaze and aloha and red volcano
Climbing roses, rose of forgetfulness—
Luring, perhaps, even the cold-flat
Victim of colds and noises
To a vision of generation and response.
But swiftly riffled in impatience by

Columns of spring flowers, the sports page
Holds your attention, holds it
With half-tones that pierce the heart, smiling
Collegiates in G-strings, athletes
Poised at the edge of pools,
Or standing in rows, splendor of limbs blooming.
Remote as a Trappist, you stare
Speechless and pierced by those earnest poses,
Outspoken sinews, fresh
With sunny down. The pages are
Consumed as by fire, gossip and photos
Charred and devoured
By the restless furnace where always glows
The intimate rose of desire.
But the news, always dangerous, enters
Without knocking, the doors
Of the body fling apart, the house is taken
Over, ransacked, rutted; the occupant,
No matter how calmly
Facing the intruder with his leveled gun,
Falls to the floor, undone, at the loud report.

HAROLD NORSE's short story "Refuge Under the El" appeared in our August 1952 number. A volume of Mr. Norse's poetry will be published next year.

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THE STUDY OF MAN

THE THIRD GENERATION IN AMERICA

A Classic Essay in Immigrant History

M. L. HANSEN

IT WAS the achievement of MARCUS LEE HANSEN to have discovered the means of studying significantly the role of immigration in American history. Others had earlier turned their hands to that subject, of course. But the long array of volumes published in the half-century before 1925 had never gone to the heart of the matter. Written under the shadow of the then current debate over immigration policy, these books had been distracted from their main point by the overwhelming interest in the immediate problem. The proponents of immigration restriction had composed such works to find arguments for reversal of the traditional American policy; the defenders of various ethnic groups had written to justify their place in the United States by a display of "contributions."

Hansen broke away from this sterile pattern. He united in himself the personal and scholarly qualities that enabled him to see immigration in its larger perspectives as one of the dynamic trends that shaped American culture. Born in rural Wisconsin in 1893, the son of Scandinavian immigrants, Hansen drew from his own home valuable insights into the processes of cultural transplantation. He was never to lose sight of the fact that he dealt in his research with the lives of human beings and not with abstract impersonal forces.

Educated in the Middle West, Hansen came to Harvard to do graduate work in history under Frederick Jackson Turner. Turner had long been impressed with the importance of immigration in the continuing settlement of the United States; and from him Hansen acquired an appreciation of the necessity of viewing the process as an aspect of the great movement of population in modern times. Finally, Hansen was fortunate in doing the bulk of his writing after the controversy over policy had ended and as the obscuring fog of prejudice began to lift.

Hansen began his work with a study of Continental emigration, largely German, in the middle of the 19th century. This study, which was his doctoral dissertation, was never published because, in the course of it, Hansen arrived at an appreciation of two factors which convinced him that such investigations must proceed at an altogether different level. He had begun by dealing with a group that had been identified in the popular and academic mind with Carl Schurz and the refugees from the revolutions of 1848. But he soon discovered that the bulk of the newcomers were not political exiles at all; they were peasants displaced by economic forces. He then realized that the true understanding of the immigration movement called for a shift in focus away from the exceptional individuals and their contributions and on to the great mass of people in motion and the causes for their uprooting.

At the same time Hansen grasped the importance of viewing these movements beyond the conventional national political lines. He understood that the forces involved were not confined to any single state but were at work throughout Europe. For these reasons he set himself the task of writing the whole history of immigration to the United States. Traveling widely through Europe, he accumulated a great mass of material the bulk of which, unfortunately, he never got to use.

For Hansen was not spared to finish his task. His tragic death at the age of forty-five, in 1938, cut his career short. He left behind the incomplete manuscript of the first volume of what was to be a trilogy (edited by Arthur M. Schlesinger as *The Atlantic Migration*, Cambridge, 1940) and a series of stimulating essays, some of which were collected in a volume entitled *The Immigrant in American History* (Cambridge, 1940).

THE paper that follows was originally de-

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livered in 1938, to the Augustana Historical Society, an organization devoted to the study of the history of Swedish immigrants in the United States. (It is reprinted here with their permission.) In this address, Hansen speaks, in the first instance, of the problems of writing the history of the specific immigrant group. But more generally, he probes the whole question of group identification as that affects the second and third generations. As in his other works, his emphasis is upon the necessity of balance. He appeals for recognition of the nature of each ethnic group as one among many in a pluralistic society and, at the same time, warns against the danger of striving for supernationalistic distinctions that might segregate one from another.

It may be expected that many of COMMENTARY's readers will be moved to ponder on the applicability to Jewish immigrants of Hansen's striking theses: his views on the second and third generation, on the significant themes to which the immigrant historian should devote himself, and above all perhaps, his prediction as to the limited survival span in America, not only of the interest of a group in writing its history, but of the effective *distinctive* life of the group itself. If one's own experience is any clue, one may predict that the first reaction of many Jewish readers to this essay will be one of surprise and perhaps bewilderment at the uncanny similarities between patterns in the adjustment of other groups of settlers and those patterns which many have thought to be peculiar to the newcomers of the Jewish group. The Jews, who are habitually thought of—and consider themselves to be—very special and peculiar, turn out to be paralleling, in important respects, the development of such distant groups as the Scotch-Irish and the Swedes. After one has observed that, the second reaction may come: to turn to the possible ways in which the Jewish group in America is, after all, exceptional and distinctive, and to consider whether, to what degree, and how American Jews, who are as alive to the traditional aspiration to carry forward their unique identity as any group in history, can hope to escape the complete amalgamation which Hansen seems to predict.

—OSCAR HANDLIN

BY LONG-ESTABLISHED custom whoever speaks of immigration must refer to it as a "problem." It was a problem to the first English pioneers in the New World scattered up and down the Atlantic coast. Whenever a vessel anchored in the James River and a few score weary and emaciated gentlemen, worn out by three months upon the Atlantic, stumbled up the bank, the veterans who had survived nature's rigorous "seasoning" looked at one another in despair and asked: "Who is to feed them? Who is to teach them to fight the Indians, or grow tobacco, or clear the marshy lands and build a home in the malaria-infested swamps? These immigrants certainly are a problem." And three hundred years later when in the course of a summer more than a million Europeans walked down the gangplanks of the ocean greyhounds into the large reception halls built to receive them, government officials, social workers, journalists said: "How are these people from the peasant farms of the Mediterranean going to adjust themselves to the routine of mines and industries, and how are they going to live in a country where the language is strange, and how are they, former subjects of monarchs and lords, going to partake in the business of governing themselves? These immigrants certainly are a problem."

They certainly were. The adventurers (call them colonists or immigrants) who transferred civilization across the Atlantic numbered more than forty million souls. Every one of them was a problem to his family and himself, to the officials and landlords from whom he parted, to the officials and landlords whom he joined. On every mile of the journey, on land and on sea, they caused concern to someone. The public authorities at the ports of embarkation sighed the traditional sigh of relief when the emigrant vessel was warped away from the dock and stood out to the open sea carrying the bewildered persons who for a week or more had wandered about the streets; the captain of that vessel was happy when the last of his passengers who had complained of everything from food to weather said goodbye—often with a clenched fist; and the officers of New York and Baltimore were no less happy when the newly arrived American set out for the West. How much of a problem the forty million actually were will not be known until their history is written with realism as well as sympathy.

The problem of the immigrant was not solved; it disappeared. Foreign-born to the number of almost fifteen million are still part of the American population, but they are no longer immigrants. By one adjustment after

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the other they have accommodated themselves and reconciled themselves to the surrounding world of society, and when they became what the natives called "Americanized" (which was often nothing but a treaty of peace with society) they ceased to be a problem. . . .

THUS there has been removed from the pages of magazines, from the debates in Congress, and from the thoughts of social workers the well-known expression: the problem of the immigrant. Its going has foreshadowed the disappearance of a related matter of concern which was almost as troublesome as the first, a rather uncertain worry which was called "the problem of the second generation."

The sons and the daughters of the immigrants were really in a most uncomfortable position. They were subjected to the criticism and taunts of the native Americans and to the criticism and taunts of their elders as well. All who exercised any authority over them found fault with the response. Too often in the schoolroom the Yankee schoolmistress regarded them as mere dullards hardly worthy of her valuable attention. Thus neglected they strayed about the streets where the truant officer picked them up and reported them as incorrigible. The delinquency of the second generation was talked about so incessantly that finally little Fritz and little Hans became convinced that they were not like the children from the other side of the tracks. They were not slow in comprehending the source of all their woes: it lay in the strange dualism into which they had been born.

Life at home was hardly more pleasant. Whereas in the schoolroom they were too foreign, at home they were too American. Even the immigrant father who compromised most willingly in adjusting his outside affairs to the realities that surrounded him insisted that family life, at least, should retain the pattern that he had known as a boy. Language, religion, customs and parental authority were not to be modified simply because the home had been moved four or five thousand miles to the westward. When the son and the daughter refused to conform, their action was considered a rebellion of ungrateful children for whom so many advantages had been provided. The gap between the two generations was widened and family spirit embittered by repeated misunderstanding. How to inhabit two worlds at the same time was the problem of the second generation.

That problem was solved by escape. As soon as he was free economically, an independence that usually came several years before he was free legally, the son struck out for himself. He wanted to forget everything: the foreign language that left an unmistakable trace in his English speech, the religion that continually recalled childhood struggles, the family customs that should have been the happiest of all memories. He wanted to be away from all physical reminders of early days, in an environment so different, so American, that all associates naturally assumed that he was as American as they.

This picture has been deliberately overdrawn, but who will deny that the second generation wanted to forget, and even when the ties of family affection were strong, wanted to lose as many of the evidences of foreign origin as they could shuffle off?

Most easy to lose was that which, if retained, might have meant the most to the civilization of the American republic. The immigrant brought with him European culture. This does not mean that the man who wielded the pick-axe was really a Michelangelo or that the one who took to house painting was in fact an unrecognized Rembrandt. They brought a popular though uncritical appreciation of art and music; they felt at home in an environment where such aspects of culture were taken for granted and (what is not to be overlooked in any consideration of the development of American life) they did not subscribe to the prevailing American sentiment that it was not quite moral for a strong, able-bodied man to earn his living by playing a fiddle. If they did not come in loaded down with culture, at least they were plentifully supplied with the seeds of culture that, scattered in a fertile soil, could flourish mightily.

The soil was not fertile. Americans of the 19th century were not entirely unfriendly to a little art now and then if it were limited to the front parlor and restricted to the women. . . . The second generation was entirely aware of the contempt in which [any other artistic] activities were held and they hastened to prove that they knew nothing about casts, symphonies or canvas. Nothing was more Yankee than a Yankeeized person of foreign descent.

The leaders among the natives proclaimed loudly: It is wonderful how these young people catch the spirit of American institutions. The leaders among the foreign-born sighed

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and said to themselves: This apostasy means nothing good. It is not good for the sons and daughters who give up a heritage richer than farm acres and city lots; it is not good for this uncouth pioneer nation which has spent its time chopping down trees and rolling stones and has never learned how the genius of one might brighten the life of many and satisfy some human longings that corn bread and apple pie can never appease. Blind, stupid America, they said, the one nation of the globe which has had offered to it the rich gifts that every people of Europe brought and laid at its feet and it spurned them all. The immigrants, perhaps, may be excused. Their thoughts and efforts were taken up with material cares and they were naturally under some suspicion. But nothing can absolve the traitors of the second generation who deliberately threw away what had been preserved in the home. When they are gone all the hope will be lost and the immigration of the 19th century will have contributed nothing to the development of America but what came out of the strong muscles of a few million patient plodders.

These pessimists were wrong. All has not been lost. After the second generation comes the third and with the third appears a new force and a new opportunity which, if recognized in time, can not only do a good job of salvaging but probably can accomplish more than either the first or the second could ever have achieved.

Anyone who has the courage to codify the laws of history must include what can be designated "the principle of third-generation interest." The principle is applicable in all fields of historical study. It explains the recurrence of movements that seemingly are dead; it is a factor that should be kept in mind particularly in literary or cultural history; it makes it possible for the present to know something about the future.

The theory is derived from the almost universal phenomenon that what the son wishes to forget the grandson wishes to remember. The tendency might be illustrated by a hundred examples. The case of the Civil War may be cited. The Southerners who survived the four years of that struggle never forgot. In politics and in conversation the "lost cause" was an endless theme. Those who listened became weary and the sons of the Confederate veterans were among them. *That* second generation made little effort to justify the action of their fathers. Their expressed opinion was that, after all, the result was inevitable and undoubtedly for the best. These sons went North and won success in every field of business and in every branch of learning. But now the grandsons of the Confederates rule in the place of the sons and there is no apologizing for the events of 1861; instead there is a belligerency that asserts the moral and constitutional justice of their grandfathers' policy. The South has been revived. Its history is taught with a fervid patriotism in the universities and schools. Recently there has been formed the Southern Historical Association as an evidence of the growing interest. The great novel of the Civil War and Reconstruction era was not written by one who had participated in the events or witnessed the scenes. It did not come from the pen of one who had listened to a father's reminiscences. *Gone with the Wind* was written by a granddaughter of the Confederacy, in the year 1936, approximately sixty years after the period with which it dealt had come to an end.

Immigration not only has its history, it has its historiography. The writing of descriptions of that great epic movement began almost as early as the movement itself. Every immigrant letter written from new shores was history, very personal and very uncritical. Every sheaf of reminiscences written by one of the participants in his later years was also history, a little more uncritical. There was much to be recounted and since sons would not listen the gray-headed participants got together and, organized as pioneer societies, they told one another of the glorious deeds that they had seen and sometimes performed and listened to the reading of the obituaries of the giants that had fallen. When the last of them had joined his ancestors the pioneer society automatically disbanded leaving behind as the first chapter of immigrant historiography a conglomerate mass of literature, much and often most of it useless. All of it seemed useless to the son who cleared out his father's desk and he resolved not to waste any of his time on such pointless pursuits.

As a broad generalization it may be said that the second generation is not interested in and does not write any history. That is just another aspect of their policy of forgetting. Then, however, appears the "third generation." They have no reason to feel any inferiority when they look about them. They are American-born.

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Their speech is the same as that of those with whom they associate. Their material wealth is the average possession of the typical citizen. When anyone speaks to such a third-generation American about immigrants, he always makes it clear that he has in mind the more recent hordes that have been pouring through the gates and any suggestion that the onrush should be stemmed is usually prefaced with the remark that recent immigrants are not so desirable as the pioneers that arrived in earlier times. It is in an attitude of pride that the substantial land owner or merchant looks about him and says: "This prosperity is our achievement, that of myself and of my fathers; it is a sign of the hardy stock from which we have sprung; who were they and why did they come?" And so their curiosity is projected back into the family beginnings. Those who are acquainted with the universities of the Middle West, where a large proportion of the students are grandchildren and great-grandchildren of the 19th-century immigrants can sense this attitude of inquiry and cannot escape the feeling of pride in which they study the history and culture of the nations from which their ancestors came.

To show how universal this spirit has been we can retrace some periodic resurgences of national spirit and relate them to the time of immigration. There were Irishmen in America before the Revolution but there is no reason to question the generalization that until 1840 two-thirds of the emigrants from Ireland were the so-called Scotch-Irish. In the 1830's their influx was particularly large; in fact, the great proportion of Ulstermen who came to America arrived in the course of the decade. Sixty years later (at the time of the third generation) a renaissance of Scotch-Irish sentiment in the United States was strikingly apparent. Local societies were formed that met in monthly or quarterly conclave to sing the praises of their forebears and to glory in the achievements of the Presbyterian Church. Beginning in 1889 and continuing for more than a decade representatives of these societies met in an annual national meeting called a "Scotch-Irish Congress." Then the movement lost its impetus. Leaders died or took up other activities; members refrained from paying dues; attendance at sessions dwindled. After 1903 no more Scotch-Irish congresses were held.

We can pass to another example. The large German immigration reached its crest in the late 1840's and early 1850's. A little over half a century later, in the first decade of the 20th century, a breeze of historical interest stirred the German-American community. One of the number was moved to offer a prize for the best historical discussion of the contribution of the German element to American life. Not only the prize-winning work (the well-known volume by A. B. Faust) but many of the manuscripts that had been submitted in the competition were published, forming a library of German-American activity in many fields. Several local and state historical societies were formed and the study of German literature in universities and schools enjoyed an amazing popularity that later observers could ascribe only to the propaganda of an intriguing nation. The Theodore Roosevelt Professorship established at the University of Berlin in 1907 was an expression of the same revival. The war naturally put an end to this activity and obscured much of the valuable work that the investigators had performed.

The auspices under which we have met this evening suggest the next example to be cited. The large Scandinavian immigration began in the 1850's and after the interruption of the Civil War reached its culmination in the 1880's. True to expectations we find that at present the most lively interest in history of this nature is exhibited in Scandinavian circles in America. Among Scandinavians, Norwegians were pioneers and in historical research they are also a step in advance. The Swedes came a little later and an intelligent prophet of that period looking forward to the cultural development of the nationality in their new home would have said: "About 1930 a historical society will be formed." It was. In June, 1930, the Augustana Historical Society was organized among the members of the Augustana Synod which so faithfully represents the more than a million people of Swedish descent who are citizens of the American republic. And now . . . I come to the topic of the evening, a subject which will be interpreted in the light of the foregoing remarks. It reads: The problem of the third-generation immigrant.

As problems go it is not one to cause worry or to be shunned. It has none of the bitterness or heart-breaking features of its predecessors. It is welcome. In summary form it may be stated as follows: Whenever any immigrant group reaches the third-generation stage in its

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development a spontaneous and almost irresistible impulse arises which forces the thoughts of many people of different professions, different positions in life, and different points of view to interest themselves in that one factor which they have in common: heritage—the heritage of blood. The problem is: how can this impulse be organized and directed so that the results growing therefrom will be worthy of the high instincts from which it has sprung, and a dignified tribute to the pioneers, and at the same time be a contribution to the history of the United States which has received all Europeans on a basis of equality and which should record their achievements in the same spirit of impartiality?

It is hardly necessary for me to remind this gathering that the Swedish stock in America is fast approaching the third-generation stage. During the decade of the 80's their coming reached its height in numbers. The census of 1930 records that of the persons born in Sweden giving the date of their arrival in the country 52 per cent landed before 1900—and this in spite of the great mortality that the newcomers of that period have suffered. The children that crowd the Sunday school rooms of the churches of this Synod it is well known are the grandsons and granddaughters of the pioneers that built the churches; grandsons and granddaughters, I am also sure, are present in increasing numbers in the student body of this college which those same pioneers, at the cost of many sacrifices, built for the sake of those who were to come after them. Among the leaders of this society are men of the first generation and of the second generation but they are the proverbial exception, or it may be better to say they are third generation in spirit. No matter how active they are in leadership the organization can succeed only if the grandchildren of the pioneers will follow.

We will assume that this will be the case; that the membership of the Augustana Historical Society will continue to increase in numbers, that the members will continue to pay their dues, that a few patrons will arise to sponsor special enterprises in research and publication. It is not my object to enlighten you on how to bring about this happy condition. . . . My suggestions will be of a different nature and will center about another set of questions: What fields shall be investigated? Where shall the emphasis be put in research and publication? What should be the attitude in which the past, which belongs not only to the Swedes but also to the Americans, should be approached? In attempting an answer I speak with no authority except that which comes from several years of delving into the records of pioneer and historical societies in America.

EVERYONE accepts the premise that self-laudation is not the end in view. Nevertheless it will be hard to keep out because of the human characteristic of speaking nothing but good of the men who labored hard and have now disappeared from the earthly stage. At the first meeting of the Scotch-Irish Congress the speakers presented one paper after the other which dealt with the achievements of the Ulsterman at home and abroad, during all ages and in all spheres of human effort. Finally one of the delegates arose and made a cutting remark that only a Scotch-Irishman would dare to make. While listening to the programs, he said, he had been asking himself the question: "What on earth have the rest of creation been doing for the last eighteen hundred years?" That question should be in the mind of every writer who is tempted to generalize on the contribution of ethnic groups to the development of American life.

If not to the laudation of great men, to what activities should the efforts of the society be directed? Let that question first be approached by a calm realization of the fact that the society will not live forever. The time will come when membership will dwindle, when promising subjects for research will be few in number and of little popular interest. That has been the life-course of every organization of this nature. The constituency becomes gradually thinned out as the third generation merges into the fourth and the fourth shades off into the fifth. Even societies with substantial endowments have in their later years found it difficult to continue to produce work of high scholarly quality. The final judgment rendered regarding the success or failure of this society as of others will rest upon the answer given to two pertinent inquiries: Did they, when the time was appropriate, write the history of the special group with whom they were concerned on broad impartial lines, and did they make a permanent contribution to the meaning of American history at large? A few proposals by the following of which a satisfactory reply can be given to both of those questions are now in order.

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FIRST of all let it be remembered that the history of any immigrant stock in America is far broader than the history of the particular religious organization that was predominant in the number of communicants that it could claim. The neglect of that fact was the first error made by historical writers in America. When they set out to write the story of the settlement of Englishmen in New England they centered it all about the migration of the Puritan church and neglected a hundred other factors that surrounded the coming and establishment of the colonies on that coast. In recent years some correction has been made but the traditional emphasis has been so great that in spite of the labors of many scholars and the resources of a dozen secular institutions, the history of New England is still less satisfactory than that of any other section of the older part of the country. From such a false start may the Augustana Historical Society be preserved!

Religion must certainly be a leading theme in the program. The church was the first, the most important and the most significant institution that the immigrants established. Its policies reacted upon every other phase of their existence but in turn and, in fact, first those other phases of their existence established the conditions under which the church was planted and grew. If one should study the agriculture, the system of land purchase, the distribution of population, the state of the roads, the circulation of books and newspapers, the development of amusements, he would be in a better position to appraise the situation that the church did occupy in the life of every community. In Mr. Rölvaag's stirring novel *Giants in the Earth* no episode is presented with more effect than that which recounts the coming of the clergyman, and the effect is produced not by the description of the man and his mission. It is the background of dull, material routine that has preceded that gives to the brief chapter its epic quality. History had been made before the clergyman and the church appeared and to be understood they must be placed in their proper order in the sequence of events.

Moreover, for an understanding of religious development, to the formation of those churches that broke with the faith of the old country relatively more attention should be given than the number of their communicants would warrant. In no other experience was the psychology of the immigrant more clearly reflected. When they said that they passed from the old world to the new many of them meant that the world should be new in all respects. When they gave up allegiance to a government it was easy to give up allegiance to a church. The secessions from the Lutheran faith can be dealt with conveniently, quickly, and without embarrassment by ascribing them to the successful methods of proselyting that the well-financed American home missionary societies employed. But the immigrant met the proselyter halfway—perhaps more than halfway—and when one knows what was going on in the mind of the person who did break away from his mother church it will be easier to understand the actions of some of those who did not break away but certainly caused frictions within the church to which they remained true and created situations that could not have arisen in the old Swedish parish from which they had recently come.

EVEN the study of politics is not entirely foreign to an organization which has chosen as its mission the history of the Augustana Synod. The clergymen of that Synod, like the clergymen of any other religious body in the republic, had no intention of destroying the fundamental separation of church and state which the Fathers of the Constitution had ordained, but how they itched to go into politics! How they lived to find in every Sunday's text some idea that could be applied to the decision of that burning political issue that the men in the audience had been discussing before the services had begun and which they would surely begin to discuss again as soon as the benediction had been pronounced. There is much evidence to suggest that the immigrant church had a great influence in determining the way in which the naturalized citizen would cast his vote. But not a single study has been made of church influence in any election and the results of such a study would throw as much light upon the status of the church as it would upon the political history of that election.

The church had some competitors in the matter of interest, affection, and usefulness. Whatever the difficulties that attended the founding of the pioneer congregation, that of inducing the immigrant to join was hardly existent. The immigrant was an inveterate joiner—a habit which was, without question, the result of his feeling of lonesomeness. In

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Europe the individual was born into many groups that he had to join in America and he entered into them rather light-heartedly hoping that from all he would derive the satisfaction that no single one could yield. When some energetic spirit said to him: come and join this fraternal organization, he went; when the suggestion of a singing society was broached he fell in with the plan; when someone undertook to line up a shooting corps he took down his gun and practiced marksmanship. All of these pursuits weakened somewhat the hold of the church and the minister was led to adopt an uncompromising attitude toward amusements that otherwise would have been held both innocent and useful. Therefore, it can be said that without a knowledge of the social environment the policy of the church cannot be understood.

If these suggestions should be followed, the product would be a history of the Swedes in America that no one could accuse of being tainted with partiality. Perhaps not all the passages would be read with a glow of pride, but there would be no humiliation, and the pride in the achievement of what no other ethnic group in America has been willing to do would soon overcome regrets that arose out of what truth made it necessary to say. In such an accomplishment the Augustana Historical Society would achieve all that its founders had hoped for it in the field of religious history, and the incidental products would give to the world a true and inspiring picture of what the Swedish pioneers had done in the task of subduing the primitive American wilderness.

ALTHOUGH a historical society has justified its existence when it has faithfully recorded the experiences and achievements of the particular element in the population or the particular region in the country that it was created to serve, still, unless the story that is written from these records can be made to fit in as one chapter in the larger volume that is called American history, the charge of antiquarianism can hardly be escaped. Men of insight who understand that it is the ultimate fate of any national group to be amalgamated into the composite American race will be reconciled to the thought that their historical activities will in time be merged with the activities of other societies of the same nature and finally with the main line of American historiography itself. How such a merging may profoundly influence the course of all national historical writing is illustrated by reference to that one group which is the most mature among the population minorities.

The Scotch-Irish Congress during the fourteen years of its existence published ten volumes of *Proceedings*. A study of the contents of these volumes reveals the widening nature of the interests growing out of the researches. The laudatory character of the contributions to the first publication has been mentioned. Such papers are not entirely absent from the last volume but there also appear titles such as these: "Paths and Roads of our Forefathers," "The Colonial Defenses of Franklin County," "German Life and Thought in a Scotch-Irish Settlement"—substantial contributions to the pioneer history of the environment in which the group developed. It is well known that during the decade of the 1890's the character of American historical writing changed. A new emphasis appeared. Scholars looked beyond the older settlements ranged along the seaboard into the communities in the back country. A word that every schoolboy can now explain crept into the textbooks. This word and this theory now almost dominate every page in the volume. The word is "frontier" and the theory is the "frontier interpretation of American history.". . .

This new emphasis is universally credited to Professor Frederick J. Turner. However, Turner or no Turner, the frontier hypothesis was bound to come and to appear in the very decade during which he wrote his famous essay. In fact, the hypothesis may be distilled from the conglomerate mass of information and theory jumbled together in the ten volumes of Scotch-Irish *Proceedings*. It is doubtful whether the pronouncement of one man, no matter how brilliant, could have turned the course of historical writing unless it were already veering in that direction. It is quite possible that Turner, who wrote in 1893, drew upon the frontier interest that the Scotch-Irish were arousing by their studies of the part that the Ulstermen took in the movement of settlement into the West. The interest that they awakened united with the scholars that Professor Turner trained to give to American history its new and significant social interpretation.

The frontier doctrine in its original narrow statement has been overdone. We are beginning to see that the Mississippi Valley was for fifty years the frontier of Europe as well as of the Eastern states and that it reacted upon

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England, Germany, and Scandinavia with a force comparable to that which it exerted upon Atlantic America. Some historians with the orthodox professional training have recognized this fact and they are attempting, in a rather clumsy way, to analyze the operation of these influences. There is, however, one omission in their training. They know nothing about the hundreds of immigrant communities in America that formed the human connecting link between the Old World and the New, nothing about the millions of personal contacts that brought humble public opinion on both sides of the Atlantic so close together.

The next stage in American historical writing will concern itself with this widened outlook. Herein lies not only the great opportunity but also the great obligation of the third-generation historical activity. It alone can provide the atmosphere; it alone can uncover the sources; it alone can interpret the mentality of the millions of persons who had not entirely ceased to be Europeans and had not yet become accepted Americans. The problem of the third-generation immigrant is to undertake the job that has been assigned and to perform it well.

THE close of this discourse may very properly be a warning. It can be assumed too readily that the history of migration cannot be anything but a desirable influence. That is not necessarily the case. Prejudice and super-nationalism may be the product. Societies organized with the laudable intention of commemorating the deeds of which any people should be proud may fall into the hands of those who will use them for instruments of propaganda.

Instead of a world covered with a network of associations which will foster an appreciation of the best that each nation has produced, we may find international societies for the promotion of hatred and intolerance. Historians must recognize an obligation to guide the national curiosity to know the past along those lines which will serve the good of all.

If told as it transpired, the epic of migration can add an ideal to take the place of one of the many that recent decades have shattered. For it is a simple story of how troubled men, by courage and action, overcame their difficulties, and how people of different tongues and varied culture have managed to live together in peace.

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LETTERS FROM READERS

The Radio-TV Blacklist

To the Editor of Commentary:

I must say the Berg article on blacklisting in radio and TV (October) is one of the clearest and best pieces of writing on the subject I have seen.

It goes a long way toward clarifying a very muddy subject and I have passed the article around to a number of people.

Keep up the good work!

Samuel Dalsimer

New York City

To the Editor of Commentary:

Thank you for the article from Commentary re: "Blacklist in TV-Radio."

I agree with the conclusions and the program, and I wish you'd send it to *all* board members of Equity and AFTRA.

Elliott Nugent

New York City

To the Editor of Commentary:

As a member of the American Civil Liberties Union I was much persuaded by Louis Berg's analysis of *The Judges and the Judged* (which I have not read and don't expect to).

I think he would have done a greater service, however, had he stated what seems to be the issue on which most of the division occurs. Is it not this:—

I believe that, except where national security in the strictest terms is involved, no man should be fired except for incompetence or refused employment except for lack of qualifications. And I do not believe that following a Communist line—or being a Roman Catholic—proves incompetence.

. . . My demands of a presidential candidate are different from my demands of a teacher or a banker. Does Berg himself see no difference between the Rockefellers hiring an accountant, and the ACLU selecting persons to decide policy for it, policy that must be impartial and, by the very nature of the group's function, is going to be predominantly concerned with Communists at this time and place in history? . . .

I would object to Berg's solution, which consists of assuming men guilty until proven innocent; I would question whether it is necessary to set up a non-official board of inquiry to determine who has a right to a job. Certainly I would try first to give such a board some legal status.

And what are to be Berg's standards to be used by this board (which should, of course, decide who is guilty, not who is innocent)? Would they include Hans J. Morgenthau, whose penetrating article in the same issue I admired, but whose conclusion—that entry into Korea was a mistake—is the current Communist line? Berg had eleven pages to do a real service by listing such criteria. He did not do so.

There will always remain a difficult border area where decisions will never be completely fair or thoroughly unjust, but just human. Finding an answer to these is hard enough. Berg contributed to the solution by clearing the air for seven and a half pages; he might better have stopped there until his thoughts had cleared and blood pressure subsided.

Edgar Crane

Minneapolis, Minnesota

The Yiddish Classics

To the Editor of Commentary:

I would like to thank Mr. Irving Howe for his intelligent and appreciative remarks concerning the writings of Sholom Aleichem ("Who Will Make Sholom Aleichem Available?" Commentary, September 1952). Perhaps it is not too much to hope that Mr. Howe will one day delight us with a more detailed analysis of the life and works of the most widely read and beloved "father" of modern Yiddish literature, an inquiry that will rival in excellence his study of William Faulkner.

Mr. Howe and the many readers of Commentary who like him regret the paucity of information concerning Yiddish writers, past and present, may be interested in learning that several outstanding centers of general education have in recent years begun to offer students an opportunity to become acquainted with the Yiddish-speaking East European world of tradition, devotion, and action which produced Sholom Aleichem as well as legions of other Jewish masters. Out of the five-year-old depart-

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ment for Yiddish language and literature at CCNY, and out of the recently organized Atran Foundation for Yiddish Language, Literature, and Culture at Columbia University may well come the writers of dissertations concerning Sholom Aleichem and the compilers (as well as additional readers) of collections of Yiddish stories in English translation that Mr. Howe mentions as desirable. . . .

Bouquets to Mr. Howe and to COMMENTARY for recognizing this need and urging that it be met.

JOSHUA A. FISHMAN
Jewish Education Committee of New York
New York City

On the "Christian-Jewish" Child

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

As a young mother, I read Eleanor K. Felder's question, "My Child: Jew or Christian?" in September's COMMENTARY with interest and surprise. I sympathize with Mrs. Felder on the difficulty of her choice. . . . But what I find upsetting is the stale, impersonal motivation that prompts Mrs. Felder to action at all. How passive the privilege of parenthood seems to be! Perhaps I am overzealous in believing that it is as much a parent's *duty* to give a child a religious background, as it is to give the child a Vitamin D concentrate. Just as the child needs additional vitamins for sturdy growth, so he needs additional faith and love, beyond his family, for mental and spiritual growth.

Mrs. Felder says her child needs a sense of "belonging." True, but this sort of thing can hardly be the result of a decision made, a program begun, and actions carried out. It is like the mother who told me that they did not have any religious observances in the home because "our children aren't old enough to enjoy them yet." The child is exposed to religion, not through weekly attendance at Sunday school, but through his early and constant experiences at home and in school. The irreligious parent, Jew or Gentile, only creates conflict and frustration, as the author noted, when he sends the child *out* to "get religion."

Mrs. Felder says that every child has the right to be exposed to religion. But she ignores the fact that the child's attitude, his acceptance, and his absorption of faith depends solely on the parent, and the home. In Judaism, this is especially stressed, by the numerous home observances still found beautiful and touching for parent and child. The smallest child will be fired by the enthusiasm of a sincere parent who makes religion meaningful for the family.

CLAIRE L. LEVI
Buffalo, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Mrs. Felder's article on the "dilemma" presented by children of mixed marriages strikes one reader, an inveterate agnostic and rationalist, as distinctly superficial and fallacious. It attaches too much importance to what "kids" in school or on playgrounds say to one of the group who cannot tell them what he is—a Jew, or Protestant, or Catholic. Kids should be told that some of their questions cannot be answered in terms they understand and they will have to wait some years for the proper answer. This is true of religion, of science, of philosophy. . . .

Parents are under no obligation to teach what they know to be false, puerile, and utterly unrealistic. They are under the moral obligation to tell the truth. If formal and orthodox religion means little to them—and this is obviously the case with the Felders—their children are bound to sense that fact. . . .

Moral conduct needs no supernatural sanctions. It is and long has been independent of religion. Men and women of the highest ethical standards and finest conduct have been rationalists, secularists, freethinkers, agnostics. . . .

VICTOR S. YARROS
La Jolla, California

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

It was with intense interest that I read the article by Eleanor Felder. Oddly enough, I too am the wife of a physician, a Jewish man, and we have a son, seven years of age, whom we are raising as a Jew. I can well understand the mental conflicts that are being waged in Mrs. Felder's mind, having gone through the same thought processes myself as the Gentile mother of a Jewish son.

I use the term "Jewish son" in answer to the first point of view expressed in Mrs. Felder's article. Mrs. Felder says: "The world demands a precise answer to the question: What are you?" I feel most strongly that the world does not ask: "What are you?" but *tells* you what you are. The son takes the identity of the father. A young "Levy" is what the name implies just as a young "O'Neill" is what that name implies. Therefore the son of a Jew, even though he may be raised as a Gentile, is in the eyes of the world also a Jew. . . . Even though the child's mother is a Christian, the child reared as such would become a type of religious freak. He would not be known as John Doe, Christian—but as John Doe, Christian Jew. . . .

I feel that the basic problem goes deeper than religious training or the manner of worshiping God. The problem, as I see it, is that of raising the child in a definite pattern and way of life. The son of a Jewish father should

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be openly identified as a Jew and be taught the tradition and history of his people as well as their religious beliefs. Through knowledge comes understanding and love, a vital necessity to the emotional stability of a child. With resultant pride in his heritage he will gain security and can face the world with dignity, wearing his title of Jew as the badge of honor it is. . . .

The conversion of the Christian mother is not necessary. She must, however, be willing to subordinate her Christianity to the extent of learning the philosophy and tradition of Judaism for the sake of her son. If he is taught the proper values and learns the first lesson of Judaism, that of each man to his own creed and manner of serving God, then he will learn to accept and live with his mother's Christian beliefs. . . . I personally decided to become a Jewess one year after my son began his religious education at the age of five, but one of the happiest families I know is that of a Jewish physician, his Christian wife, and their two Jewish children. Both the Jewish and the Christian holidays are observed in their home. The children are happy youngsters, aware that they are Jewish and why. They follow the routine of Hebrew School and synagogue services normal to all Jewish youth, yet their mother has retained her Christian affiliations. . . .

FRANCES A. PRICE

Camden, New Jersey

The Critics and the Opera

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

A bit of misinformation crept into the story of the Hebrew National Opera as I told it in my article "Culture in Tel Aviv and Environs" (COMMENTARY, August 1952). The article as published makes it appear as if the curious feud between the Opera and the critics has been terminated. It has not. The critics are still not allowed into the Habimah building when the Opera performs, and no efforts have been made by the management to befriend the musical profession.

PETER GRADENWITZ

Tel Aviv, Israel

John Dewey and Dr. Barnes

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I ask the privilege to comment on Sidney Hook's article on John Dewey (September issue). I was a student at the Barnes Foundation and a personal friend of the late Dr. Barnes who, on many occasions, opened his personal correspondence to me—this merely to offer a factual background for what I have to say.

That portion of the article where Dr. Hook discusses the Dewey-Barnes friendship is grossly misleading, since it omits facts indispensable to an understanding of what Dr. Hook describes as an "indulgent friendship" and a "serious shortcoming" in Dewey. By parenthetically linking up the erroneous statement that "Barnes had originally been a pugilist" with Dewey's alleged explanation of "Barnes as a man with an inferiority complex" he admits an effort to reduce a man of greatness to a dimension which would make it possible to live with him.

The key to any clear understanding of the Dewey-Barnes relations can be found only by recognizing first the mutual interest of the two men in the scientific method as it applied especially to both the field of teaching and the appreciation of the arts; then in their collaboration in putting their "educational theories into practice" (Dewey's words). Nowhere in the article does Hook give the facts of Barnes' formal education—an M.D., and a Ph.D. in physiological chemistry; recognition as an international authority on paintings; years of graduate work with Dewey; and his authorship of books on art and aesthetics. In contrast to Hook's portrayal of Barnes as "brutal" and undemocratic (which to Dr. Hook was in flat contradiction to everything that Dewey stood for) Barnes' record of adherence to democratic principles is evidenced by the following: (1) students were always encouraged to discuss openly all differences of opinion; (2) they were selected without reference to race, color, or creed; (3) needy students were given scholarships to continue studies at home or abroad; (4) he defended with all the means at his command those whose democratic rights had been violated (Russell and others); (5) he challenged to public debate all who attacked him unfairly—a challenge never accepted.

Dewey's acknowledgment of his "intellectual debt," not explained by Hook, is abundantly evident in Dewey's writings, and is best illustrated in his "Foreword" to *The Art of Renoir* where Dewey refers to the Barnes Foundation as "the most thoroughgoing embodiment" of his own educational philosophy. There were warm, personal ties which were never repudiated by Dewey. Dewey was not opportunistic, nor can it be believed that he would have long tolerated attempts by Barnes to "exploit" him, as Dr. Hook alleges. The suggestion that Dewey put up with Barnes in the hope of reforming him is too absurd to merit consideration here.

As to Dr. Hook's account of Barnes' personal relationships: (1) By admitting he "had few dealings with Barnes," he disqualifies himself at the outset to make any authoritative statements about them; (2) his reference to Barnes'

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unbridled language at the "museum" in the presence of other people is a complete distortion of what actually did take place. I have been informed by others present on that occasion, who knew Barnes intimately and understood his lusty sense of humor, that Barnes' behavior was in a completely jocular vein. Dr. Hook's unsupported charge that Barnes was guilty of "cheating" is so serious that it should not be made without giving incontrovertible evidence. Barnes' "exploits" related to Dr. Hook by "individuals who had worked for him" are not sufficient evidence for an unbiased judgment of Barnes' character.

Space does not permit a detailed account of the Barnes-Russell case. The Barnes-Hook correspondence, which Dr. Barnes showed me, discloses the following statements made by Dr. Hook: he "did not know there was this other side . . . morally relevant to the issues involved"; he expressed regret at "having heard only Russell's side of the story" at the time he became Russell's "partisan," thus ignoring the accepted practice of examining all the available evidence in any controversy. Barnes' handling of the case is one more example of his integrity and democratic practice. Too few important facts are known about the Dewey friendship for Barnes—your readers are entitled to them.

JOSEPH WALDMAN, M.D.

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

[Note: COMMENTARY has received a number of other letters similarly taking issue with Sidney Hook's account of the relationship between John Dewey and Albert C. Barnes—ED.]

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Perhaps Mr. Barnes didn't show Dr. Waldman all the correspondence. The facts are these. Aware that I was indignant at the treatment Bertrand Russell received at his hands, Barnes wrote me on May 8, 1944, that if I wanted to know why he "fired" Russell I could find out by reading the court records, copies of which were in Dewey's possession. Dewey then wrote me on May 10 (Barnes had sent him a copy of his letter to me) and offered to show me the records. When I saw Dewey we went over the briefs carefully. After some discussion, Dewey admitted that Barnes had no legal case, but on the basis of what Barnes had told him about a private understanding he had with Russell, he expressed the belief that Barnes had a moral case, for the reasons I set forth in my article. On May 17, replying to another letter from Barnes (sent May 12), I wrote that I had seen Dewey and was impresssed by his statement of the moral aspect of the case. Until then I had only heard of the legal side, because Barnes' sole contention was that Russell had breached his contract, which I knew was patently false. I expressed no "regrets" in the letter and didn't refer to myself as a "partisan." This is pure invention on Dr. Waldman's part. But on the grounds indicated in my article I was inclined to believe what Dewey had told me on the strength of what Barnes had said to him. I couldn't get in touch with Russell, who was by then, I believe, abroad. When I finally succeeded, he assured me that Barnes had made the story up out of whole cloth and expressed surprise at Dewey's naivety in believing him. The courts vindicated Russell completely despite Barnes' prediction to the contrary. When I subsequently told Dewey of Russell's disclaimer, he made no comment.

Even if Barnes had a better case against Russell, the methods he used against him were spiteful, cruel, and unjust. The attempt to prove that Russell was a poor teacher and scholar (in a public release of January 16, 1943) would have been hilarious if it were not so vile. Anyone who can claim that Barnes' behavior in the Russell case is an example of "integrity and democratic behavior" doesn't know what these words mean. Dewey made no such claim for Barnes.

I want to conclude by pointing out that I was not writing a biographical sketch of Barnes but only my opinion of Dewey's relationship with him. It was Dewey who told me about Barnes having once been a pugilist and that he had an inferiority complex. I see nothing denigrating in either fact, if they are facts. I reported my own limited experience with Barnes accurately. This is enough to convince me that nothing Dr. Waldman says of him is incompatible with my impression of Barnes as a kind of post-Renaissance tyrant, full of energy and colorful obscenity, art-loving and -hoarding, patronizing, domineering, and completely arbitrary in his relations with human beings. He never forgave vigorous dissent or criticism except on the rare occasions when Dewey made them.

SIDNEY HOOK

New York City

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

"Great Jewish Books" and Torah

THE GREAT JEWISH BOOKS AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON HISTORY. Edited by SAMUEL CAPLAN and HAROLD U. RIBALOW. Horizon Press. 351 pp. $3.75.

Reviewed by EMIL L. FACKENHEIM

THE Jew of the age which produced Hitler and the State of Israel has almost necessarily a powerful sense of the unity of Jewish destiny. This, in turn, has led him to search for a "philosophy of Jewish unity." But formidable problems stand in the way, and the philosophers of Jewish unity are often driven to pretend that they do not exist. All this is reflected in *The Great Jewish Books:* the sincerity of the search, the profundity of the tensions and contradictions, the ambiguous phrases which, consciously or unconsciously, seek to conceal them.

Everybody agrees that there are great Jewish books, and almost everybody would agree on what some of them are. No list would omit the Bible, the Talmud, the Siddur, the commentaries of Rashi. Judah Halevi and Maimonides are obvious choices from medieval philosophers. The Zohar is the classic of Jewish mysticism, the Shulchan Aruch the authoritative code of Jewish law. There may be less agreement when it comes to modern books, but the choices made here would scandalize no one: Graetz's *History* is the classic among Jewish histories; Herzl's *Judenstaat* and Ahad Ha'am's *Essays* are the classics of Zionism; Bialik is the greatest modern poet in the Hebrew language. Thus this book, which offers discussions of these twelve books and selections from their texts, is quite representative of accepted opinion. Indeed, the editors made sure that it should be so: their preface informs us that "the project was begun by polling a representative group of scholars, rabbis, writers, and literary critics for their choices of those Jewish books which throughout the ages have played the most creative role in the survival of the Jewish people, and most deeply influenced their life and thought."

And yet, what *do* we mean by "great Jewish books"? This volume begins by quoting Mohammed's description of the Jews as "the people of the Book." But "*the* Book" and "The Great Jewish Books" are two different—more, incompatible—conceptions. The "great books" are great human creations by Jews; *the* Book is a divine gift to Jews.

Even the non-Orthodox may be startled to find the Bible in a list of "great books." As for the Orthodox Jew, such a procedure must be altogether unacceptable. To him, the Bible, and in a lesser degree the Talmud and the Shulchan Aruch, ultimately transcend all human standards of evaluation because they are divinely revealed; and to value them in terms of their "creative role in the survival of the Jewish people" is little short of sacrilege. True, Orthodox belief has always regarded the Torah as a law of *life*, and of Jewish life in particular; but its validation was never considered to depend on its survival value, or for that matter, on the survival of the Jewish people. On the contrary, the validity of Jewish "peoplehood" and survival were grounded in its being a necessary means to the fulfilment of the divine plan. The Orthodox Jew has always agreed with Saadia's dictum that Israel is a people only by virtue of the Torah. Nor is it possible for Orthodoxy to take another stand and remain Orthodoxy. Once Saadia's dictum is reversed and the Torah is made a means to the survival of Israel, it is reduced to a man-made book. And what men have made, men are permitted to change; indeed, they are morally obligated to change the means (the man-made book) whenever such change is required by the end (the survival of Israel). Thus the Torah, in the Orthodox sense, is no mere "great Jewish book"; since its author is God, it is, properly speaking, neither "great" nor "Jewish," nor for that matter a book, in our sense. It is Torah.

The existence of a Jewish humanism which denies revelation is, of course, nothing new. What is new is the reluctance on the part of this humanism to reject Orthodoxy outright; its attempt, inspired by its desire to assert "Jewish

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unity," to find a broad (and vague) framework in which Orthodoxy, too, will have its place. And nothing less than startling is the willingness of prominent Orthodox rabbis to accept this dispensation. As a result, the position of the Orthodox contributors to *The Great Jewish Books* cannot avoid being profoundly ambiguous. Rabbi Federbush calls Talmudic law the "fulfilment of the lofty humanitarian ideals of the Torah," and he confines himself to ethical selections from the Talmud, such as would be "great" even if the Talmud were a purely human book. Rabbi Fasman forthrightly asserts that the Shulchan Aruch is divinely ordained; yet he also finds it necessary to point to its democratic spirit, and to its importance in "Jewish survival" during the past four centuries. The non-Orthodox contributors face a similar dilemma. Thus Rabbi Goldman, an outspoken humanist, regards the Bible as the "outgrowth of the divine wrestlings . . . of the Jewish people," and its truths as "intuitions" rather than revelations; but he will not exclude his Orthodox brethren from the synthesis, and can write: ". . . by the aid of grace or as a result of a stroke of genius, *as you will*" (my italics).

The fact is, there cannot be any synthesis, in any such loose terms as these, of Orthodoxy and humanism, of *the* Book and the "great Jewish books," that will stand up. The only significance of this particular attempt is the eagerness of both sides to bring such a synthesis about. It may well be that out of the present search for Jewish unity there will eventually emerge a faith neither "Orthodox" nor "humanist" in the old sense. This reviewer himself believes that neither present-day Orthodoxy nor humanism is ultimately tenable, yet each contains truth. But a genuine search for a tenable Jewish conviction must begin with a clear exposure of the relevant conflicts and intellectual contradictions in which we find ourselves. Like so many projects which start out by seeking the cooperation of a "representative group," *The Great Jewish Books* presents only a pseudo-synthesis, concealing tensions instead of stating and resolving them.

But might not the approach represented by this volume be valid if, omitting the Orthodox, it tried for unity among all other shades of "positive Judaism"? We perceive further difficulties if we pose two questions: Does the greatness of a "great Jewish book" reside in its intrinsic, timeless value, as religion (or, for that matter, as literature or culture), or in its appropriateness to the social and political needs of a Jewish generation? And is it Jewish because its content is Judaism or Jewish vision, thought, or insight, or because it has aided the survival of the Jewish people?

The German liberal-Jewish generation that spoke of the "essence of Judaism" would have chosen, without hesitation, the first answer to both questions. By and large, that generation had surrendered the Orthodox belief which sees Jewish existence as based on a divine interference with history; but it certainly did not surrender the moral and religious truth value of the "essence" of Judaism. Through the intuition of man rather than the revelation of God, this Judaism yet had an absolute claim on the Jewish people: the continuity of Jewishness was *essentially* the continuity of Judaism, only *incidentally* the continuity of the Jewish people.

It would be difficult to hold such a view in our time. Too many significant events have happened in the life of the Jewish people which have little, if anything, to do with a rather abstract "essence of Judaism." Furthermore, our generation has become anthropology-minded, seeing even apparently timeless, perennial values as actually arising from the concrete needs and aspirations of concrete situations. *The Great Jewish Books* only reflects the spirit of our age when it leans to the second answers to the above two questions. In the age of pragmatism and cultural relativism, the continuity of Jewishness consists essentially in the "group survival" of the Jewish people; and Judaism (or, as some of the contributors would prefer, "Jewish culture") has been, and is, a mere means to such survival.

Thus where any collection of "great Jewish books" made a generation ago would surely have included Mendelssohn's *Jerusalem* and Hermann Cohen's *Religion der Vernunft*, the present volume gives us Herzl's *Judenstaat* and the essays of Ahad Ha'am—works which are included not at all for their timelessness but, on the contrary, precisely for their timeliness: they said what was "needed" when it was needed. More than this, we are informed that the value of the Shulchan Aruch consisted, at least in part, in its being a "unifying force," and that of Graetz's *History* in bolstering Jewish self-respect. And of the Zohar, Rabbi Agus has this to say: "The Kabbalists, in general, and the authors of the Zohar, in particular, set out to restrain and modify the rationalistic spirit in Judaism so as

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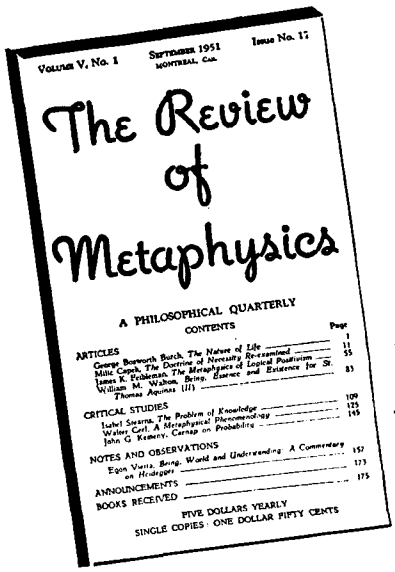

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to build up the kind of sacrificial loyalty *that the circumstances of their time required*" (my italics). Rabbi Essrig expresses this pragmatic "group-survival" viewpoint most frankly when he implies (for himself as well as for Ahad Ha'am) that traditional Judaism is a mere "theological rationale for Jewish survival."

And yet, there can be no doubt that this group-survival philosophy is hopelessly inadequate as an interpretation of Jewish tradition and Jewish destiny. If the "essence of Judaism" approach failed to do justice to the concrete life of the Jewish people, the "group-survival" approach surely fails even more abysmally to do justice to Judaism's innate claim to moral and religious truth. There are, to be sure, those who would transform Judaism into a mere folk culture devoid of all authority; but such a transformation would involve a more radical break with tradition and history than even the most radical Reform Jew ever contemplated.

BUT the fact is that the contributors to *The Great Jewish Books* intend no such break with the past. Yet this only shows that their instinctive sensitiveness to Jewish life and tradition is far sounder than the philosophy to which the majority of them profess to subscribe. The latter, taken seriously, would make their entire project unintelligible. Why should anyone accepting the relativistic dogmas of the group-survival philosophy turn to the past at all? If the Judaism—or rather, Judaisms—of the past are mere outmoded "rationales for Jewish survival," why should the modern Jew (whose "needs" are different) bother with them? *The Great Jewish Books* not only bothers with the past; the past is its central concern. Moreover, the further back it goes into the past, the more consistently does it deal with books whose greatness lies less in temporary "survival value" and more in being intrinsically representative of Judaism. Clearly, our contributors may hold that Judaism is, in some sense, a means to the survival of the Jewish people; but they also hold that, in some other sense, the Jewish people have been, and should continue to be, a means to the survival of Judaism. But this latter insight is sufficient to wreck the group-survival philosophy, or at least its adequacy as an interpretation of Jewish life.

This volume has thus in itself a peculiar timeliness: it reflects, without resolving, the problem of Jewish self-interpretation in our age. Its philosophy of Jewish unity is a failure, partly because of the gravity of the historic issues of our time, and partly because of its too unreflective adherence to pragmatic and positivistic modes of thought. Both these factors are characteristic for this Jewish generation: the former, in the mind of every thinking Jew, at once challenges him and makes him feel somehow inadequate; the latter makes him even more inadequate than he needs to be, blighting a large section of religious thought. But this volume is timely also in another, and more hopeful, respect: it shows that while our "philosophic" (or rather ideological) response to the events of our time may thus far be a failure, our instinctive response is not. The Jewish heart has been far more perceptive in fathoming Jewish destiny in our time than the Jewish mind. This fact must make us hopeful that, with sufficient intellectual patience and integrity, we may also succeed in formulating the adequate philosophy of Jewish unity which we all desire.

British Socialism's Dilemma

NEW FABIAN ESSAYS. Edited by R. H. S. CROSSMAN. Turnstile Press, London. 215 pp. $3.25.

Reviewed by GEORGE LICHTHEIM

BRITISH socialism has long been a stumbling block to European Marxists and American liberals alike. Standing midway between laissez-faire and total planning, critical of capitalism and contemptuous of Communism, democratic and yet (in its Fabian form) mildly authoritarian—it has been something of a puzzle to friends at home and enemies abroad. Of late it also seems to have become a puzzle to itself, and voices are being raised that question whether it is not an unprofitable compromise rather than a successful synthesis. These mutterings have multiplied since the demise of the Labor government of 1945-51, and it was presumably by way of self-criticism that the Fabian Society earlier this year authorized the publication of eight scholarly essays, with a brief preface by Clement Attlee, under the promising title *New Fabian Essays*.

The contrast between this rather introspective volume and the confident tone assumed by the original *Fabian Essays* of 1889 has not been lost upon unfriendly critics, and there has been a good deal of comment to the general effect that the new Fabians, unlike their spirit-

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ual ancestors, are by no means sure of the road they propose to travel. As against this, simple fairness compels the statement that the new *Essays* are both clearer in intent and more precise in their use of socialist methodology than the 1889 volume. People who talk glibly of a decline cannot have read the original *Essays,* which are with one exception—Bernard Shaw's—remarkably dull and by no means impressive in their intellectual content. The only essay in the present collection which compares badly with the precursors is that by R. H. S. Crossman, who assumes the mantle of Shaw and is duly smothered by a garment fit to be worn only by a genius. Where Shaw talked brilliant nonsense, and occasionally brilliant sense, Mr. Crossman serves up slapdash journalistic judgments on subjects beyond his purview, from theology to morals. But this is the only failure. Denis Healey writes trenchantly on foreign affairs, Mrs. G. D. H. Cole has something valuable to say about education, and Messrs. Strachey, Jenkins, Crosland, Mikardo, and Albu get to grips with economics in a manner which is impressive for its combination of hardheaded common sense and mastery of the technical apparatus. It is no criticism of their ability, but rather of the Fabian approach as a whole, to say that the effect of this important book is nonetheless disturbingly negative.

THE reasons why this is so have to do in part with Britain's unsolved, and perhaps insoluble, economic problems, and in part with the dominating role of the American economy, which has reduced the socialist experiment in Britain to the status of an interesting but minor phenomenon in Northwestern Europe—more or less on a par with the socialist regime in Sweden which, unlike its British counterpart, has endured uninterruptedly for twenty years and proved an astonishing economic success. This double awareness of partial failure and wholesale decline in status nags at the consciousness of the eight authors, and produces a series of reactions ranging from Mr. Crossman's and Mrs. Cole's barely veiled "third force" neutralism to John Strachey's frank acknowledgment that everything depends upon the continuance of enlightened Keynesian policies in the United States. Mr. Strachey states quite bluntly that there will shortly be a major breakdown in international trade unless masses of capital are moved to the backward countries to step up food and raw material production; and that only the United States can do the job on the

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requisite scale. And Mr. Crosland, though a shade less pessimistic about the probable impact on Britain of long-term economic changes abroad, is equally emphatic in holding that social stability in Britain depends on economic stability in America. There is little to choose between the general outlook of these writers and that of the surviving New Dealers in Washington, except that the social side of Keynesianism—a well-oiled and efficient capitalist society—makes no appeal to them. They are, however, quite aware that it will for a long time continue to be the ideal of most liberals and labor leaders in America, and Mr. Crosland even suggests American capitalism can function for another century along orthodox lines: "The further transition to statism will either take a century or not occur at all—*unless* (and these are two crucial conditions) either the cold war and high rearmament persists for twenty years, in which case statism will make a gradual entry, or the United States reverts to pre-war figures of unemployment." There is nothing in this to which orthodox defenders of capitalism can take objection.

Inevitably—if you are a liberal Keynesian—the question arises why what is good enough for the United States should not be equally good—or perhaps even better, i.e., more urgently needed—for Britain. Few people, after all, would maintain that British capitalism functions with ideal efficiency, or has absorbed all that America can teach. At this point it becomes difficult to disentangle the socialist argument from the national one. Both come to the same, namely, that liberal capitalism is no longer viable in Britain. It is a phase which has passed with the disappearance of the peculiar 19th-century combination of factors that made it possible, and its place is being taken by what Mr. Crosland has the courage to call "statism," although some Labor ministers and propagandists not long ago maintained, for public consumption, that it was the British form of socialism. "Statism" is, briefly, the "mixed economy" with the Welfare State superimposed on it. It is not socialism because—here we encounter the Fabian shibboleth—equality has not (yet) been achieved. But it is a step on the road, and it depends on the political capacity of the Labor movement whether the next step is shortly going to be taken.

THAT, more or less, is the argument. And although it is qualified—especially in Mr. Strachey's essay—by reminders that the British economy is at the mercy of world forces beyond its control, there is an underlying suggestion that British socialism has already proved viable. The Labor government of 1945-51, it is held, was successful in planning the mixed economy, and it now depends upon purely political—i.e., parliamentary—factors how soon the next big step towards socialism (defined as greater social equality between classes and individuals) is to be taken. We know how to plan. All we need now is a clearer view of what we want the socialist society to be like, as regards such matters as educational equality, income equalization, and workers' control in industry. Provided no one drops an atom bomb on us, the Garden of Eden is in sight if the boys at the back of the hall will only keep quiet and let us get on with the job. What we seem to lack at the moment is a parliamentary majority, and that is largely the fault of the Liberals, who deserted us at the point where the Keynesian technique had made capitalism viable once more and removed the threat of a total breakdown. Unlike the Liberals, who merely demand that there shall be no mass unemployment, we stand for complete social democracy, and since we know how to plan, and since Britain is a democratic country where the majority rules, we shall eventually get sufficient support.

As against this restatement of the orthodox Fabian position, which has behind it the established political leadership, two different kinds of criticism have made themselves heard within the Labor party: that of the left, which flatly challenges the assertion that Labor has shown itself able to plan, and that of the pessimists among the economic experts who point out that Britain's problem is not how to become more democratic but how to survive. These criticisms overlap to some extent, and of late they have been fused into a very trenchant and highly effective argument employed by socialists on the right and left wings of the movement—E. F. Schumacher (in *Twentieth Century*), G. D. H. Cole (in the *New Statesman*), and T. Balogh (in the *Tribune*).

These writers are all economists of considerable technical repute, and their philosophies range from Christian Socialism to Marxism. About the only thing they have in common is a conviction that the Fabian solution is not only inadequate, but has already failed, and that very radical—and more definitely *socialist*

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—policies will be required if the next Labor government is to drag the country out of the economic morass in which it is firmly stuck at the moment. G. D. H. Cole has shocked the readers of the *New Statesman* by flatly stating that the eight billion dollars obtained since 1945 have been largely misused to maintain a standard of consumption that Britain cannot afford; and while he and Mr. Balogh are sharply critical of the Labor government's readiness to accept American demands for rearmament, the gravamen of their charge is directed against the failure to underpin the expensive Welfare State with a strictly planned and more efficient economy. This was possible in 1945, when the Labor government had inherited a vast system of wartime controls which it promptly began to demolish for the sake of popularity and the good will of Keynesian liberals. It was possible also because in 1945 the whole country was ready for a radical break with the past. The middle classes were willing to give austerity and socialism a chance *provided Labor showed itself able to solve the national problem, which is a problem of insufficient productivity*. They have now swung back to their traditional attitude, and so have the workers. The boat, in other words, has been missed—perhaps for good. And it has been missed because those in control were the very Fabians who are now trying to justify their historic failure by calling it an experiment in building up the Welfare State.

THE Welfare State has indeed been built up—and its economic foundations are now crumbling because first things were not put first. But that is the logic of Fabianism, which has always, as a movement, taken British leadership —or at least Britain's economic viability—for granted. Fabianism is distributist socialism; from the beginning it has been concerned not with production but with consumption. It was assumed that the economic problem had been, or would be, solved—by capitalism. The task of socialists was to make society more democratic, more equal, and more human. Even in this latest volume, issued in the year 1952, there is only passing reference to the world food shortage, the menacing change in the terms of trade, and the need to invest capital in overseas food-producing areas. And just as on the economic side the Fabians have taken capitalism for granted, so on the social side they have taken it for granted that increasing doses of democracy would bring about the socialist way of life.

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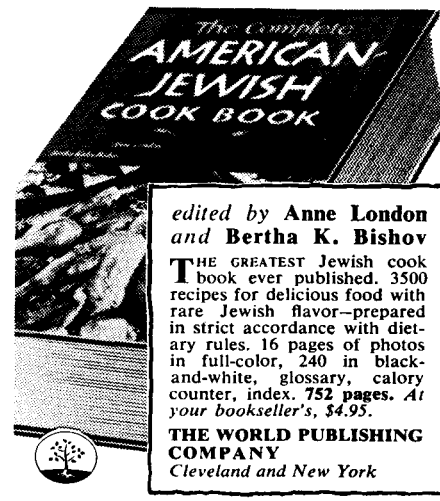

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But what does more democracy mean to a fluctuating mass of people distracted by cinemas and Sunday tabloids, and shortly to be deluged by commercially sponsored television programs as well? More of the same article? But what if public apathy turns out to be *the* national problem? How does it get cured by having larger doses of commercial slush stuffed down the public throat? "Perhaps the question of commercial broadcasting is more important, from this point of view, than the question whether the cement industry should be placed under public control," says E. F. Schumacher ironically. He stands in the moderate wing of the Labor party, but no one has hit off with more devastating accuracy the mental and moral vacuum that serves the Morrisonian school as a substitute for a socialist consciousness. That the right wing is getting alarmed may be inferred from the recent sponsorship by Mr. Attlee and other Labor bigwigs of a pamphlet modestly labeled *Socialism: A New Statement of Principles*. The pamphlet —the work of a group of intellectuals known as Socialist Union—is a feeble enough affair, but at least it raises in a timid way the question what exactly socialists are supposed to believe

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in, apart from the need to control cement output.

No such problem worries the Fabians. It is of course possible to fall into the opposite error of preaching morals where what is needed is a definite program of action. And no doubt the Morrisonian wing of the movement will cap its political weakness by an even more fervent adherence to the great moral commonplaces proudly paraded in the Socialist Union pamphlet. Ethical preaching can become a substitute for clear thinking. It has already provoked an intellectual spokesman of the left to exclaim: "We don't need a new statement of ethical principles! They were given to us in the Sermon on the Mount! What we need is a program for socialist planning." No doubt. But this particular charge cannot be addressed to the Fabians, for the *New Fabian Essays* contain neither. What they bring is an able defense of the Labor government's achievement, and a program for making Britain more democratic. It is hardly enough, unless one tacitly assumes that the next Labor government, like that of 1945-51, will obtain American subsidies to keep the Welfare State going. It is not an exhilarating prospect.

An "Anti-Fascist" Fable

BREAD FROM HEAVEN. By HENRIETTA BUCKMASTER. Random House. 309 pages. $3.00.

Reviewed by GRANVILLE HICKS

VERY possibly Miss Buckmaster thinks she has written a realistic novel, but *Bread from Heaven* comes closer to being a fable. It is a fable with certain characteristically modern ingredients, and if it fails to seem pertinent to our present situation, that is Miss Buckmaster's fault rather than the fault of her basic idea, her *donnée*. Self-conscious nobility of purpose, sentimentality, and deep-seated literary ineptitude combine to turn the idea into mush.

The idea might be stated as an entry in an author's journal: "To confront a typical American community with victims of the worst outrages of fascist evil." The victims turn out to be a nineteen-year-old Czech, Karel, who has survived three years of concentration camp horrors, and Nikky, a one-armed child whom Karel rescued after an American air raid near Buchenwald. Brought to the United States by a benevolent American soldier, the young refugees are not so well received by the soldier's wife, and when she plans to separate them, Karel takes Nikky and flees. They come to rest in an unnamed town in western Massachusetts.

Of the account of what Karel endured in concentration camps one can say only that it has to be believed because any literate person knows that such things happened, and if Miss Buckmaster fails to give Karel's sufferings any true reality for us, it must be admitted that better writers have failed at the same task. (This part of the book is no better and no worse than Remarque's *Spark of Life*, which, in its abbreviated way, it resembles in theme as well as content.) Of what happens in the New England town, on the other hand, this reader is deeply skeptical.

Let us look at a few of Miss Buckmaster's contrivances. Soon after his arrival in the town, Karel goes to the library, and the first book he picks up is a volume of Walt Whitman, which he opens to an appropriate quotation. The person who most truly befriends Karel and Nikky is an aged and philosophical Negro odd-job man, who is ultimately martyred. Karel falls in love with the daughter of the richest woman in town, who is full of social and racial prejudices. The political boss, small and self-important, not only *is* a small-town Hitler; he is capable of thinking, "Maybe Hitler hadn't been so wrong."

It is, in short, a fable. Not that Miss Buckmaster doesn't manage to give some sense of the actual mixture of kindness and cruelty, insight and prejudice, responsiveness and indifference that one finds in a small town—or anywhere else. But that hasn't been enough for her, nor has she the knowledge and patience to bring her small town to life. The principal ingredients of the tale are invented to conform with *a priori* patterns in her mind.

THE first of these patterns is an old-fashioned one: the idea that the evil in the world, the enemy of all righteous people, can be adequately described as fascism. Karel triumphs over the horrors of overt fascism in Europe only to be confronted with embryonic fascism in a New England village. The second idea, more in the current vein, is that the love of life is in a constant struggle with the love of death and that life will triumph. The themes merge, however, for the good people, the anti-fascists, are also the living people. The final scene, when Nikky gets his artificial arm in the presence of all the good, anti-fascist, life-loving people, crowns

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the whole with a happy ending of pure Victorian sentimentality.

It is perhaps to Miss Buckmaster's credit that, unlike the proletarian novelists of the 30's, whom in so many ways she resembles, she subordinates the political to the philosophical theme. But if she must be congratulated for trying to transcend her limitations, the outcome is less than happy. The proletarian novels, by and large, were moving only insofar as the reader brought to them his own emotions, giving a kind of reality to what was in fact so imperfectly realized. *Bread from Heaven* demands exactly the same kind of cooperative reading. This fable of life and death can have meaning only for the Henrietta Buckmasters of this world, who are probably still numerous.

CERTAINLY the quality of the writing is unlikely to encourage anyone who approaches the book in anything but a sympathetic mood. Take a descriptive passage, one of far too many: "It was Sunday and the bells were ringing. The hawks were wheeling. In the farther pastures and the ridges of the hills the mists were rising. In the nearer pastures the cows were moving like slow water." As Dr. Johnson said of Ossian, "Sir, a man might write such stuff for ever, if he would abandon his mind to it." Not only the description but also a good deal of the narration has that sort of mushiness, and the dialogue bears little resemblance to the way people talk.

What Miss Buckmaster is trying to tell us is both true and important: we in our comfort are horribly, unpardonably indifferent to the evil and the misery in the world. But, if one may ask the question without flippancy, who is Miss Buckmaster to preach to us? Her own vision of the evil in the world is, if not partisan, then certainly narrow, and to the rendering of that vision, such as it is, she brings slight talents. The book is synthetic, and its ingredients are ersatz. It is the kind of book that has given the novel of social problems its present low reputation.

The No-Men

THE MAN OUTSIDE. THE PROSE WORKS OF WOLFGANG BORCHERT. Introduction by Stephen Spender. New Directions. 259 pp. $3.50.

Reviewed by ALFRED WERNER

WOLFGANG BORCHERT had little happiness. Born in Hamburg in 1921, he was eight when the depression hit Germany, twelve when the Nazis came to power. Twice he fought as a private with the German army that invaded Russia, twice he was imprisoned for his anti-Nazi utterances. Prison and the army so weakened him that he spent the greater part of his last two years in bed, and died in a hospital in Basle on November 21, 1947, one day before the première of his play *The Man Outside* at a Hamburg theater. Yet in his short and troubled life he accomplished much; he was one of those poets who come to fruition early. In the introduction to this volume, which includes all of Borchert's prose but unfortunately omits his rich lyrical work, Stephen Spender refuses to speculate upon what Borchert's future development might have been if he had lived; instead of indulging in such idle conjecture, we should enjoy the fruits that ripened on this untended tree.

The present volume includes *The Man Outside* and some thirty-odd short stories and sketches. Reading it, I was reminded of something Jakob Wassermann said in a speech in 1932: "In Germany alone there are at present about six million young people without any firm basis of life. I do not speak of the unemployed; I speak of the hopeless ones. That goes down to the root. . . . Life has no stimulus to offer them any longer." Poor Borchert, one of these six million without hope, had to find his "stim-

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ulus" in a world in ruins. The sketch "Dandelion," undoubtedly autobiographical, tells of the political prisoner in cell 432 who one day finds a tiny dandelion, holds it up to the light, presses it to his nose. Other stories tell of the young man who grew old on the Eastern front and came home to a gigantic heap of rubble. Unforgettable are his descriptions of postwar Hamburg, the huge city smelling of garbage, where men live without God, where love can be bought for a pair of silk stockings, where both the lamps and the stars are pale and lusterless. "Why do I live? Out of pure spite!" And he adds: "Our depth is the abyss." He never mentions the Nazis by name, but he makes it clear that it was they who stole his youth, who chased him into the Russian forests, into the foxholes where shooting a man in another hole was the only "fun" permitted to him.

THIS book is not an effusion of self-pity. It is a realistic study of an apocalypse, written in the terse, blunt language of one who once admired Hoelderlin and Rilke. Borchert's poetry, contained in the one-volume *Gesamtwerk* ("Complete Works"), echoes now and then the romantic strains of traditional German poetry, but in his prose there is the staccato expressionism one finds in the dramas of Ernst Toller, ex-soldier of the First World War, or even in the plays produced by Frank Wedekind before 1900. Unlike these earlier writers, however, Borchert had no time to develop a systematic *Weltanschauung*. He abhorred the war, but he was not fully aware of the forces that created it. He had only his despair. Unless perhaps we see in his "Manifesto" an attempt to visualize some small strip of land in the ocean of despair: "We are no-men. But we do not say No in despair. Our No is a protest. And for us Nihilists there is no peace in kisses. For in our void of No we must again build a Yes. Houses we must build in the free air of our No, over the abysses, the craters and the slit-trenches and over the open mouths of the dead."

Borchert may not have read Sartre. But there are links between the "Nihilism" of the German and the "Existentialism" of the Frenchman. Both teach us that, deprived of the support of religion, we must build our own rafts to carry us across the river of time. In this sense, Borchert's message is not a plea for mass suicide, but an attempt to replace preoccupation with Germany's doom by an aesthetic creation that will outlive the pitiable "outsider" of Hamburg.

Freedom and the Small Farmer

FARMING AND DEMOCRACY. By A. WHITNEY GRISWOLD. Yale University Press. 214 pp. $3.00.

Reviewed by R. F. TANNENBAUM

THE president of Yale, in this reissue of a book first published in 1948, considers from various angles the relation between small-scale agriculture and democratic government, drawing very skillfully on extensive researches in history, political theory, agricultural economics, and legislative policy, and presenting his findings in an agreeable style. The most influential opinion he cites in these matters is, of course, Jefferson's; Jefferson thought that a society of industrious smallholders was the *sine qua non* of a viable democracy in America, that the sort of landed property which promoted social equality and economic security was the best possible nourishment for the growth of individual freedom. If he was right, then we are in a very bad way indeed; only eighteen per cent of our citizens now live on farms, and of them about forty per cent are tenants, while an equal proportion have had to mortgage their lands. Technological progress is bringing no relief, for the mechanization of agriculture makes the largest unit the most profitable, and more and more small producers will be forced to the wall. Our traditional form of agriculture is in danger; does this spell disaster for American democracy?

Mr. Griswold devotes the greater part of his book to reassuring us on that score. History, we are told, has proved Jefferson wrong; democracy can get along perfectly well without family-sized farming, which indeed is more of a hindrance than a help. In Great Britain, he reminds us, the most resounding victory of democracy, the gradual extension of the franchise from 1832 on, was won in an age when only fifteen per cent of the land was occupied by its owners. In France, to go to the other extreme, where there is seventy-five per cent owner occupancy, democracy has had a career so checkered and unstable that it is something of a wonder that it has survived at all. Not that Mr. Griswold is able to show any causal connection between the landholding system and the volatile nature of French political life; as a matter of fact, he does not even try. It is also rather surprising to find that this specialist in American history has ignored the evidence

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of our own struggle for the democratic vote; during the 1820's and 1830's, the fight for the extension of the franchise was carried on, in Eastern state constitutional conventions, by the representatives of small farmers in close alliance with urban reformers. As for the democratic territorial and state constitutions of the West, they were almost wholly the work of frontier farmers. At least so far as America is concerned, democracy owes quite a bit to the man on the family farm.

Elsewhere, it is very hard to come to any definite conclusion. In Scandinavia, in the 17th century, the peasants eagerly aided in the creation of royal absolutism; in several of the Swiss cantons, they were the purest sort of democrats. Mr. Griswold would guess that "democracy has flourished most in the few countries, with the notable exception of Germany, that have attained a high degree of industrialization and urbanization." But in Denmark, Finland, Uruguay, and Costa Rica there is no heavy industry to speak of, and yet democracy flourishes. And if Germany is a notable industrial exception, how are we to explain it?

IT MIGHT be wise to admit that there is no universally necessary social foundation for democracy. German democracy failed, in what seemed the most advantageous sort of social milieu, primarily because the course of German history prevented the development of a strong and vital tradition of political liberty and personal equality. It is this sort of tradition, historically acquired in different ways, which makes democracies of both industrial Britain and agricultural Denmark. But it is not the only requirement for a functioning democracy; it is generally agreed that the people, in a democratic state, should be literate, well informed, and for the most part in good circumstances. Often one distinct social group can be singled out as leading the way in the expansion of democracy; which one it may be, would seem to depend on which class is beginning to get a share of the available prosperity and education large enough to whet its appetite for power. Usually it has been the urban bourgeoisie; certainly that was the case in France and England; in 19th-century Spain it was, of all things, the military; and in some countries, particularly in early America, it was the independent farmer. Jefferson was substantially correct, for his time and his place. As for the present, if the future of democracy lies in the direction of social reform, then the vanguard of democracy in our time ought to be the industrial laboring class.

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But the vanguard is not the backbone, and it is as the backbone of democracy that our independent farmers have been praised, in an unbroken succession of tedious campaign addresses. The backbone upholds; it does not (or should not) break, and it will never lead. In Tudor and Stuart England the yeoman, the independent farmer of his day, was praised to the skies as the backbone of English liberty and English legality. In those times liberty, like law, was a matter of precedent and tradition, and it was rightly felt that the owner of a small country property would almost invariably stand up for the ancient ways against any kind of citified novelty. He was what we should nowadays call a conservative. In the 18th century Arthur Young observed that "a man will love his country better even for a pig." The same would be true of a home, or a motorcar, or a gilt-edged bond; but land is one of the most stable forms of property. That, of course, is the whole point of Point Four land reform. Land reform does not make democrats, but it breaks Communists.

If for no other reason, then, our system of family farming should be handled with extreme care as a sort of last refuge of popular conservatism. This is its real value to democracy in modern times; it provides a body of opinion which will guard the rather old-fashioned virtues of civil and political liberty against the demand for state efficiency. But, as we said, the small farmer is not doing too well. What can be done to improve his position?

Mr. Griswold presents the paradox that, to save the family farm, we must reduce the number of farmers. He puts forward a pretty cogent argument, backed by an almanac of

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statistics, to the effect that most of the farmers' ills come from there being about twice as many of them as the country really needs. Politically powerful, they are able to escape the full economic consequences of this fact by means of an elaborate system of public subsidies and planned limitation of production, of which Mr. Griswold gives one of the best concise accounts I have ever seen. He maintains that it would be a far more realistic solution and, in the long run, a less costly one, to give the impersonal forces of the market free play, ruthlessly pushing inefficient producers off the land and into the towns. Decreased competition, plus rural electrification and the mass production of smaller, cheaper farm machinery, would then make it possible for small-scale operators to stand up against the technological storm and, what is more, to stand on their own feet.

This proposal, rather frightening in its Manchesterian rigor, has little chance of getting anywhere so long as there is a farm vote in the Middle West. Our farmers now seem to be dead set against anything which might upset the agrarian status quo; and, since in one part of his book Mr. Griswold seriously suggests collectivization as a possible solution to our agricultural problem, one is inclined to think that this stubbornness, whatever its economic cost, may not be such a bad thing after all.

BOOK REVIEWERS IN THIS ISSUE

EMIL L. FACKENHEIM is assistant professor of philosophy at the University of Toronto.

GEORGE LICHTHEIM is a prominent British journalist; he has written numerous articles on political subjects for our pages.

Among his other works, GRANVILLE HICKS is the author of *Small Town*, a report on the life of an upstate New York community.

ALFRED WERNER contributes to the *New York Times Book Review* and other periodicals.

R. F. TANNENBAUM is a free-lance journalist; this is his second appearance in COMMENTARY.

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By H. A. Overstreet*

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"Fifty or a hundred years from now, some historian may make the discovery that in the mid-twentieth century the democratic peoples of the world became suddenly aware that if they did not act pretty quickly to make more freedom in the world, they would lose even what they had. Examining the things that those mid-twentieth-century peoples began to do to remove old enslavements and bring new opportunities into life, he may come to the surprised conclusion that in those years, when tyrannies were at their height of terror, the democratic peoples learned a new way of warfare—that of defeating the enemy by doing the things that took away his psychological weapons."

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* from "Alternatives to Disaster",
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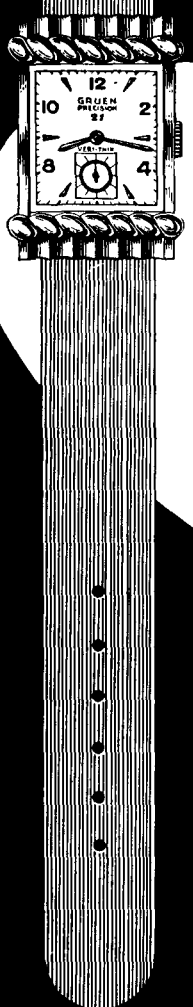

What's the difference between a watch . . . and a GRUEN?

There's a great, wide, *wonderful* world of difference between an ordinary watch on one hand . . . and a rich, superbly styled *Gruen* on your wrist!

For there's something *distinguished* about a Gruen . . . something *truly beautiful* . . . something *dependable* as time itself.

Whether it's a contoured Curvex . . . or an exquisite Veri-Thin . . . or a modern, self-winding Autowind you've in mind . . . *now's the best time* to see the fabulous selection at your Gruen jeweler's!

Time Hill — Home of Gruen
Fashion Capital of the Watch World

GRUEN THE PRECISION WATCH

THE GRUEN WATCH COMPANY • TIME HILL, CINCINNATI 6, OHIO • IN CANADA: TORONTO, ONTARIO

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